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**Time and the Information Market:
The Case of Spain**

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Alfonso Nieto

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1. Concepts

1.1. Limits on the concept of time

A) *Time and eternity*

Time is one of the commonalities among all human beings¹; all of us have a twenty-four hour day, a seven-day week, a twelve-month year, but in reality: how much time do we really have?

It is not easy to define time and the Augustinian perplexity: «What then *is* time?» is valid. «If no one asks me, I know, if I want to explain it to a questioner, I do not know»². The usual notion of time refers to the «duration of things subject to change» or to «part of this duration»³. Duration is the continued existence of a thing that remains in its identity; it is the presence in its identity. This permanence can adopt various forms, of which we underline two: permanence in a being that experiments no kind of change, eternity; permanence in a being subject to all kind of change, substantial and accidental, time. Eternity is an immutable permanence; time, the duration of a changeable being. Eternity is not «something quantitative, although it might seem to be immensely lengthy, but something qualitatively distinct, free and unconditional»⁴.

¹ «Everything, Lucilio, is outside us; only time is ours». SENECA, *Letters to Lucilio*, I.3.

² «What then *is* time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to a questioner, I do not know. But at any rate this much I dare affirm I know: that if nothing passed there would be no past time; if nothing were approaching, there would be no future time; if nothing were, there would be no present time». SAINT AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*. XI, XIV, translated by F.J. Sheed. Sheed & Ward Ltd, London, 1945, p. 217.

³ REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA, *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, 21ª edición, Madrid, 1992.

⁴ Guardini, Romano (1997), p. 94.

Time considered as a measure of duration refers to a before and an after; understood as a result of measurement, it takes into account the past, the present and the future⁵. This is why one can distinguish between subjective time, the personal experience of a person's passing through life or the course of time, and objective time referred to the perception of the past, the present and the future⁶. Objective time can be considered from various perspectives that have descriptions adequate to the measurement object, e.g. earthly, biological, mechanical, atomic, informative, etc.

The human being is a protagonist of time⁷, but as what? An owner? A proprietor? There is only one owner, the Eternal Being, God, a truth that in some way was prefigured in Platonic thought⁸. For man, time is limited, irreversible, unchangeable, unalterable. Man ignores what total time he has in life, though he knows that it is limited, and that there is no going back. There is no returning to the past, and however high the price offered, time is not for sale; it is impossible to lengthen it or shorten it.

Man is a temporal being⁹, who lives in time, not with a proprietor's title but with that of an owner's. He may use time, enjoy it, make good use of it, waste it, never recover it. Man spends time and when he uses it well, he makes an investment for eternity.

Only as a metaphor can it be affirmed that man «produces» time, in so far as he molds it and fills it with work to produce assets or provide services. The effective transcendental conception of time responds to the free exercise of man's work that manages to superate its proper temporal-

5 SAN AGUSTÍN, *ob. cit.*, en (2), XI, 20, 26, pp. 485-486.

6 Cfr., among others, Vickers, Douglas (1994), p. 6.

7 «Si non esset anima, non esset tempus», reads a medieval expression rooted in Aristotelian thought.

8 «The days and the nights, the months and the years did not exist before, and god made them appear, introducing order in the sky. These are parts of time, and as time flees, the future and the past are forms that in our ignorance we improperly apply to the eternal being. About him we say: he has been, he is, he will be; when in truth, one can only say, he is». PLATO, *Dialogos. Timeo*, E.D.A.F., Madrid, 1965, p. 870.

9 Polo, Leonardo (1993), p. 109.

ity, because to work a great deal and well is meaningful if one has eternity in sight¹⁰.

Being in possession of time not only entails its use and enjoyment, but also its external conditionings, consequences of the free exercise of freedom. Wealth and scarcity of time are related to a personal critical standard, the capacity to accept or reject information offers; in conclusion, to exercise responsibility. A consequence of this conditioning is the paradox of time, inexplicable to many fellowmen: it increases lifetime and reduces worktime, but a person has a sensation of lacking time¹¹. There is time anxiety, perhaps because of wanting to detain it instead of trying to ride along with it.

B) *Contents and time*

The information marketplace is the physical site or the social environment that channels, promotes and carries out offers and demands of information products or services¹². Advances in information and communication technology widen this market, which comprises from a household or a certain social group to the most varied areas of taste and personal dedication (sports, hobbies, professional specializations, etc.) Technological innovations provide easy access to more information in less time. However, it is not so important to reach more people in a shorter period of time than to satisfy their informative needs in an adequate way. The key to the offer/demand relationship lies in the *contents* of information products and service-

¹⁰ On the various interpretations of time in the history of economic activity, vid. Elchardus, M. (1991), pp. 71 & ss.

¹¹ «... there increasingly exists signs of a “paradox of time”: in so far as the individuals have more time available, live longer and work less, there exists an increasing impression of the pressure of time and its shortage».

The new information and communication technologies, certainly significantly contribute to this paradox of time. Both in work as well as in leisure, in production or in consumption, the traditional models of time utilization are being questioned; this poses fundamental challenges for the society, the economic activity and the individuals. CE (1997), p. 46.

¹² Nieto, Alfonso; Iglesias, Francisco (1993), p. 222.

es; that is why the informative market is currently thought of as a market of *contents* which tries to satisfy the needs of a specific public¹³.

Consuming information products means consuming time, an asset of an intangible, immaterial nature, though materializable because of its quantitative measurement and its qualitative valuation. Offers and demands of time find places in the information marketplace. Time commands the informative media environment and not vice versa.

Consuming time efficiently is a way of working, hence the labour market is a time market. The marketplace of the time dedicated to information is created by the activity of offering and consuming time on information products and services.

Time is an object of offer and demand on the information marketplace. It is related with the more or less intense behaviour of the persons who participate in this marketplace, and their degree of productivity. Using time to acquire information (e.g. reading a magazine, or watching a television programme) may be an intelligent task if the person's leisure is the objective. An intelligent person's leisure is a way of making the use of time rentable. A person who *kills time* does not value it; he is wasting something that is unique, unrepeatable and irrecoverable, though his action may be a consequence of ignorance or a conscious misuse of freedom.

One of time's functions on the information marketplace is to make possible the passage from ignorance to knowledge. Vickers underlines the close relationship that exists between time and knowledge, which conditions future knowledge beforehand. If this was known, it would not be future knowledge; it would be something known now. Knowledge and information are acquired and lost within a space of time.

Providing a service quickly enhances its quality, and is a success factor¹⁵. Quick service on the information marketplace means making good use of

13 Nieto, Alfonso (1996b), p. 196.

14 Vickers, Douglas (1994), p. 9.

15 Cherubini, Sergio (1996), p. 63.

time, as what happens in the twenty seconds of a television advertising spot that tries to make an efficient offer.

1.2. Information time

A) *Towards a concept*

Information on data, events, judgements, opinions and ideas may lead to a person acquiring knowledge, but this does not mean that this information is necessarily a source of knowledge¹⁶. Our present society is characterized by the great amount of information that exists, and which —to a good measure— is the cause of the constant lowering of the costs of data and news transmission and storage, etc.¹⁷. However, the facility to be informed does not always mean that the person has a greater volume of knowledge.

Time and information have, in their origins, a common note of being intangible, immaterial realities. This coincidence has advantages and disadvantages when trying to use a concept that combines both terms. The idea of information time suggests immaterialness. With regard to what is time, this lasts or runs out while the person's intelligence obtains information. Information is framed in a temporal process that begins with the *materialization* of an idea, data, news, entertainment given in the media (press, radio, television, digits). Once materialized, the initial product needs time to multiply and enter the channels of circulation, in the process phase that is described as *industrialization*. This product is also submitted to a temporary phase of *commercialization* (distribution, sale, etc.) which may be similar to previous phases, although it may consume a different time. Time is present in every process of information¹⁸, and in the elements that participate in this process¹⁹. Each of these stages consumes and

¹⁶ CE (1997), pp. 17-18.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁸ Cousido, Pilar (1989a), p. 686.

¹⁹ Nieto, Alfonso (1996b), pp. 201 & ss.

needs time. Subjects of the information relationship (informer, mediator, user) who need an adequate time participate in this process.

Time has an incidence in the shaping, structure and activity of media industries, e.g. the structure of a press company that publishes a daily newspaper differs from that of a television company, among other reasons because of the different implications that time has on the elaboration and distribution of their respective products. Time acquires special legal and economic meaning in media industries. It is a motor of change in messages and their witness, and is present in all communications media²⁰. Time is an information object in as far as it serves as a measure to determine the nature of a piece of news, or of a datum, e.g. travelling schedules, the opening hours of shops, weather forecasts, etc.

The transfer of the previous ideas to the media environment allows to typify time as *time devoted to information*, and to give a concept of it. The total or partial duration of a product or service, whatever its contents and nature, is information that needs to be produced, distributed or consumed on the information marketplace.

B) *Some manifestations*

The previous concept allows us to advance in the analysis of the principal manifestations of time dedicated to information. The study is intentionally global and generic, with an application to markets that respect free enterprise. Six manifestations of time dedicated to information will be analyzed: a) it's market position; b) people's participation; c) consumption; d) permanence; e) cost; f) coverage.

a) *Position*. With regard to its nature or position on the market, it is possible to consider time dedicated to information as a *dynamic* reality or a *static* reality. Dynamic consideration admits a difference in *real time* and *historical time*.

Real time is the immediateness, from the emission of a message to its reception, from the making of an offer and its corresponding perception by

²⁰ Cousido Pilar (1989b), pp. 139-140.

a real or potential customer. In services, the speed in an offer/demand has growing economic meaning which provokes a race to reach maximum response speed, e.g. Reuters, the information agency sets its *real* time in six seconds or less²¹; *historical* time is that which superates six seconds.

In general, historical time is spent in thinking and in considering decision-making information. It is the time used in choosing between various options²², in contemplating the unknown future with a weight of subjectivity²³, because of the risk of interpreting or evaluating information before deciding.

The static consideration of time dedicated to information leads, first to emphasize the role of a key element on the information market: ignorance. The usual way of emerging from ignorance is through information which leads to knowledge. The ignorant person is a potential offerer of time to come out of such a situation. The information market moves among constant offers of ignorance and time, without which the market would disappear. People look for information on what they are ignorant about. That is why the information marketplace is especially open to «ignorant» people with time. Naturally, there are various levels of ignorance and of time availability.

In many cases ignorance is superated by dedicating time to acquiring information, and this may culminate in knowledge. On other occasions there is not enough time, and attempts are made to condense and accelerate it, with negative results that do not superate the state of ignorance. Speed does not allow the ignorant person who lacks information and knowledge to dispose of time to superate this situation. But there is something yet more deplorable, —to ignore the fact that only by spending time a person can superate his ignorance—.

Ignorance may be motivated or provoked by a fast and intense accumulation of information that tries to reduce the time of response, e.g. the accu-

²¹ CE (1997), p. 46.

²² Vickers, Douglas (1994), pp. 194-195.

²³ O'Driscoll, Jr.; Gerald, P. (1996), p. 2.

mulation of offers that does not give enough time to interpret their meaning, and leaves a datum hanging in a person's mind («33% free», «25% reduction», a «three for the price of 2 offer», etc.), or postponements that seem to appease the consequences of the decision taken («buy now and pay in 24 month's time»). Living under the pressure of real time means running the risk of undergoing unsuspected changes, without knowing how to emerge from ignorance²⁴.

b) *Participation*. If we pay attention to individual's participation on the information marketplace, time dedicated to information may be manifested as *personal* time, and as *virtual* time. In the first case, time is used up in man's day to day living, with his direct protagonism. Virtual participation can create apparent reality, where the great possibilities of irreality offered by information and communication technologies frequently transform information time for dialogue into time for monologue. In this case information time gains in speed but may lose efficiency, i.e. efficacy is achieved in the way of speed but by depersonalizing the relationship, it does not achieve the full effect of the information action. That is why the user of virtual information time is, at times, as active and quick as the message he receives, and just as ignorant of its meaning.

With reference to service markets, real time conversation²⁵ usually first attends the making of the offer and secondly, the necessities of the caller. It frequently shortens the time needed to decide, and is more interested in the product or service brand than in the caller. Real time conversation may give the caller a sense of proximity, when in reality it distances the person and in some way shares decision-taking, e.g. the difference between information time destined to carefully read a specialized information magazine, and the time dedicated to zapping between fifty television channels.

c) *Consumption*. Information time is the total amount of time used to look for or consume information. The protagonist of this time is the person who reads about, listens to, or views, information products or service-

24 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

25 McKenna, Regis (1995), p. 91.

es. The principal interest for businessmen and advertisers is very often the total time accumulated by all the people who have read, listened to or seen their product, i.e. the audience, or the total number of times the product has managed to draw attention at some specific time.

Time accumulation is carried out at specific moments. In television the highest total of time receives the term of *prime time*, leaving the generic term of ordinary or *day time* for the rest of the time. However, this second term has temporal subclassifications because of the hour times and the audiences, with the corresponding effect in advertising rates. In some way this difference also manifests itself in other media: e.g. the morning and evening press.

It is possible to give a qualitative meaning to time accumulation. The minutes of information time destined to television has a different value not only with regard to «how many» people watch it, but also to «who» watches. Hence, the distinction between *prime time* and *day time* has relative value.

Differences in age, sex, marital status, education levels, etc. contribute in shaping products and services that manifest themselves in the information times that cover contents of a personal nature, adequate to these circumstances, materializing in specialized press, programmes for different audiences, etc.

d) *Permanence*. The longer or shorter permanence of an asset or service on the market is usually rated according to the common division of long or short term. The difference is marked by the length of a normal year, being short term if the length is that of a year or less, and long term when it is more. This qualification can also be applied to information time, according to whether the continued offer of time and its demand by an editor or advertiser superates a year. From the perspective of information time destined to advertising, the campaign does not always have a relationship with these time limits as the campaign may cover a period of more than six months or less, and may comprise periods that are longer than a year.

The nature of the product or service and its consumption can contribute to qualifying it because of its durability on the market, and according to whether it is of *fast* or *slow* consumption. The temporal condition of the

product effects the planning of offers on the advertising market; fast consumption speeds the offer that is being realized in the midst of information time. Temporality affects the very offer as per its duration on the market and is submitted to the free decision of the person who puts the product on the market and marks exceptional time situations such as special offers, sales or bargain sales.

There are information times that have shaped periods and become landmarks in the history of mankind. In the history of ideas, 7 B.C. has left a permanent mark, while for the Christian world, 1 A.D. is the culmination of man's history. The contents of information can also influence a period and leave a mark on the history of the information marketplace, with specific manifestations that may be replacements, reprints, etc. of products that have managed to remain in the memory of information time.

e) *Costs*. Time dedicated to information is the measure that contributes to calculate the cost of a product or service on the information marketplace. Production, distribution and exhibition costs take into account the time employed in each of these tasks. In advertising, time has an influence on the determination of costs and the levels of the market share. Time also indicates other activities and shapes specific types of time, reflected in expressions such as «*air time*» —open to advertising insertions on radio and television—, «*broadcasting time*», «*dead time*», etc.

f) *Coverage*. Information time may refer to different geographical influences, and cover various information marketplaces: world, multinational, national, regional, local, and suburban. Geographical coverage of time with information has an incidence on advertising activity, because one can get to know the product's acceptance rate which could repercute in its economic valuation. Coverage also has a projection on non-advertising information contents and enables the analysis of acceptance levels at various times.

C) *Principal characteristics*

Three things characterize the manifestations of time dedicated to information: a) Universality and the wealth of information b) Growing valuation as an immaterial asset. c) Chronofagia.

a) *Universality and wealth of information.* The number of people who have the time to receive and consume information or entertainment programmes is growing considerably. This is a universal reality which affects fellow citizens of different races, ages, beliefs, cultures, education levels. What Etzioni indicated, in relation to time in general, can be applied to this reality: its social importance grows and its economic value decreases; just as what happens with other factors that participate in human relationships, time is under the influence of moral judgements or considerations²⁶.

Universalization leads to a wealth of information, and vice versa. There is a great deal of information time offered, and a demand of time by the firms who wish to place information products on the market. This universalized wealth of information leads to considering time as a qualified element, which with its speed contributes to the transit from *marketplace* to *marketspace*²⁷. Among the causes of the universalization and wealth of information, one can highlight the innovating contribution of informative and communication technologies that enable information to be reutilized at various moments by successive users, facilitates the use of the same information by various persons at the same time and in different sites. However, experience shows that from the problem of information scarcity, we have gone to the problem of a wealth of information which imposes forms of time management that are increasingly more complex²⁸.

An abundance of time does not always correspond with a wealth of good quality information contents to fill it. The relationship between time/content quality runs through complex channels that do not allow for global valuations. In the information marketplace this relation should first be observed, from the double concept of time: occupational and non-occupational. For someone who participates in the elaboration of a sports news magazine, the time dedicated to this task is occupational time characterized by contractual relations with the publishers, while for someone con-

²⁶ Etzioni, Armitai (1991), p. 22.

²⁷ For this double concept of the market, vid. Rayport, J.F.; Sviokla, J.J. (1995), p. 75.

²⁸ CE (1997), pp. 18-19.

suming this product, reading time generally has a non-occupational condition; it is leisure time.

The complexity of the use of time on certain occasions rises from the distance between production and consumption which makes the offer/demand encounter difficult, such as in the case of the distribution problems of the daily press. This distance or separation tends to reduce itself in time thanks to direct or *on line* communication: this may provoke numerous offers which instead of saving time may result in a greater consumption of it²⁹, because making a choice increasingly occupies more time.

b) *Evaluation as an immaterial asset.* The original immaterial nature of information time has a value that should not be ignored. Immaterial assets are manifestations of an important hereditary sector of the media industry³⁰.

One of the best assets of the service industry is the wealth of human intelligence accumulated by the people who work or collaborate with it³¹. When effort is combined with time, intelligence may increase. This work in time is reflected in signs with a zero evaluation, that increase their value in the measure that it accumulates efficient information time. The brand, the commercial name or the sign of the commercial establishment may acquire value in the course of time, maintained with prestige, that should be reflected in the balance sheet.

Time contributes to prestige or its loss, in obtaining a favourable or unfavourable image, solid in continuation or insecurity, with regard to the future. Information time invested in making a brand known, leads to it being better recognized on the market, and is a *strategic asset* of the industry characterized by the three things that Arrègle indicated: difficult to imitate, difficult to substitute, and difficult to change³². This *rare asset* is

²⁹ CE (1997), p. 48.

³⁰ For an evaluation of the commercial background of media management, vid. Nieto, Alfonso (1996b), pp. 189-191.

³¹ Quinn, James Brau (1992), p. 209.

³² Arrègle, Jean-Luc (1996), p. 29.

important for time-based market competitiveness³³, that is the crossroad of effort and money, capable of producing immaterial added value.

Time is a unit that serves to formalize work relationships, to evaluate the economic result of industrial activity³⁴. The so-called *endogenous growth*³⁵ of a firm, founded on the value of the ideas and the initiatives of those who work in the firm, allows Romer to establish competitive levels in the market³⁶, precisely because of its power in intangible values. This evaluation guideline can be transferred to time as an intangible value in the information marketplace.

c) Chronofagia. A *rebellion* of intangible assets, e.g. of ideas is more efficient and has greater effects than an armed rebellion, because it is the consequence of that. Time also protagonizes rebellions that are almost always silent, consequences of attempts to accelerate it, force it, with disorder or chaos where irreflexion is the guideline of decision. Hard work to achieve *real time* at any cost may lead to *unreal time*, to consumer-filled decisions, and the reason for time being specified in the vertigo of consuming time. The past is converted into the future which jumps over the present time. This is chronofagia, time that devours time, a kind of intelligence cannibalization that flees towards an unreal, irreconcilable, irrational world. Perhaps this picture of chronofagia is not very far from that of some actual media markets.

33 Toffler, Alvin & Heidi (1996), p. 58; Arrègle, Jean-Luc (1996), pp. 25 & 30.

34 Van Raaik, W. Fred (1991), pp. 29-30.

35 Romer, Paul (1993), p. 354.

36 With regard to this, the following text is interesting: «If the earth was returned to the physical state that existed ten thousand years ago, wiping out all structures, physical capital, and civil engineering projects, but the total stock of accumulated knowledge was retained (in an exempted library where books and other records were kept), current standards of living would be recovered within a few generations. If the experiment were reversed, with the physical state of the world retained but the state of knowledge returned to what it was ten thousand years ago, our economic prospect would be much bleaker». *Ibid.*, p. 355.

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2. Time from the offer

A) *Previous considerations*

What does it mean to offer time on the information market? Answering this question first implies delimiting who can offer and who can demand time in this market. A person is subject to time offer/demand relations, and therefore offers time to read, listen or see informative products. With regard to the time demand, this is a task that is a responsibility of the information manager who distributes these products on the market. Offer and demand rotation feeds and gives an impetus to the information market whose business volume depends on the success in the time offer/demand relation (See Figure 2.1).

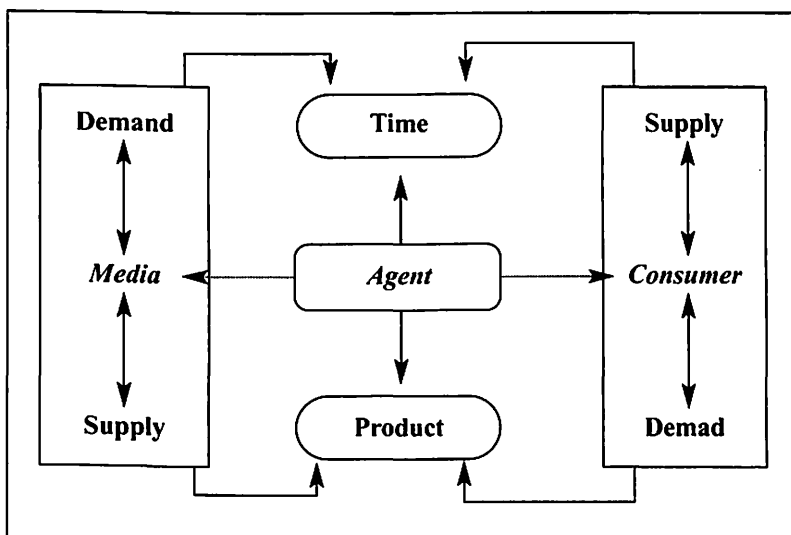


Figure 2.1. Demand and supply in the information market

What is the advertiser's position? The advertiser makes a time offer that is linked to the time given by the person who is the target of the informa-

tive product. The advertisement is a vehicle for formalizing a time offer/demand relation which, according to the tariff agreed on, allows to quantify the value the company gives to time and to space, bearing in mind the audience.

The time/audience relation when applied to an informative product has an economic relevance and serves as a usual measure in the information market. It is an informative relation that admits different valuations according to the condition of the time and the audience. This relationship may be altered by circumstances outside the information market, e.g. a time increase destined to the service sector (that occupies more than 60% of the total employment in the European Union³⁷), or the tendency to substitute the weekly focus of work for another – annual or multiannual³⁸.

The audience/time relation is applied to the different traditional media (press, radio, cinema, television) and the «new media» that comprise others, basically derivations of previous media and a consequence of technological advances.

The present work focuses on three basic elements: audience, media and time. The principal statistical sources consulted include: The *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (INE), *Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación* (AIMC), that produces the *Estudio General de Medios* (EGM)³⁹, SOFRES⁴⁰, INFOADEX⁴¹, *Centro de Investigación sobre la*

37 CE (1997), p. 53.

38 Du Roy et al (1990), p. 25.

39 The statutes of the «Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación» (AIMC), which is the proprietor entity of the EGM, was registered in July 1988 in the Home Ministry (Registry of Associations). One of the objectives of the AIMC is «investigating the audience of the different communication media, distributing the reports among its associates without any intention of profit, and the democratic principles in the association's organization and function».

40 Sofres Audiencia de Medios measures and controls television audiences. It belongs to Taylor Nelson Sofres, the international market investigation group.

41 InfoAdex S.A. was constituted in 1994 as a consequence of the union of two companies that proportioned Adex services (Advertising Expenditure): Duplo and Repress Nielsen. It forms part of the group A.C. Nielsen and controls all conventional media advertising.

Realidad Social en España (CIRES)⁴² and the *Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión* (OJD)⁴³.

B) *Some basic data*

Although statistical data describing the information market are necessary, they have a relative value. Figures contribute to define the study field but they need an adequate interpretation. This idea is the starting point for the following selection of basic data.

Together with the population figures that are the object of study, it is important to know the age distribution. However, on this aspect there is no general classification criterion that can be applied; the entities that measure audiences do not agree on the minimum age of individuals. On the other hand, in terms of audience research, in some places people is considered *adult* with 13 years⁴⁴, while in others with 14 years⁴⁵ or 15 years⁴⁶.

The study of the time supply should manage some basic data to facilitate the subsequent analysis. Two groups of data (synthesized in tables), referring to Spain: a) on population; b) and audience and time, are shown below.

a) *General data on population*

Table 2.1. with INE data applied to 1998 shows the distribution of the Spanish population, according to groups aged 14 years and over. The total population of 34,132,027 is made up of 51.3% women and 48.7% men.

42 Basically, CIRES (1997): *La realidad social en España (septiembre 1995-junio 1996)* is used.

43 The Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (OJD) was constituted in 1964 as a non-profit entity and integrates advertisers, editors and advertising agencies. It controls and verifies the circulation of publications that voluntarily adhere to the OJD.

44 For example, Holland.

45 This is the case of Spain.

46 For example, Italy.

Table 2.1.

Population distribution, aged 14 years and over

<i>Ages</i>	<i>Population 14 +</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Years</i>	<i>Index</i>
Total	34,132,027	100.00	14-65+	
14-19	3,379,070	9.9	6	1.65
20-24	3,379,070	9.9	5	1.98
25-34	6,553,349	19.2	10	1.92
35-44	5,631,784	16.5	10	1.65
45-54	4,812,615	14.1	10	1.41
55-64	3,993,447	11.7	10	1.17
65+	6,382,689	18.7		

Source: INE and author's own information

The index that figures in the last column corresponds to the population percentage of each group divided by its age. The highest index is that of the group aged 20-24 years; this does not mean that it is the group offering the most time, but serves to measure possible future situations.

The ages between 14-44 years represent 55.5% of the potential population offering time to printed and audiovisual media. The remaining 44.5% is made up by a population aged 45 years and over. These two age blocks, each one of approximately 30 years, form a reference point when considering the information market. The block aged 25-34 years covers the largest population proportion that is the object of analysis, and is interesting from the perspective of future time supply.

The first place in the media markets is occupied by the household, or any space where the first supply/demand of time is carried out. A household is considered an information site⁴⁷ when its members have and make use of technical means to receive and consume information products.

⁴⁷ On this point see Portilla, Idoia, *Consumo de Televisión y Hogar en España: Análisis Estadístico*, Tesis de Doctorado, Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, 1998.

In the western world the household has undergone important changes since the 1980s. The number of persons who form a household has dropped, there is an increase of one-person households, and the equipment that enables access to many information products (videos, cable, computers with access to Internet, etc.) has reached a high level.

For the study of the time devoted to household information products, the first step should be to identify households in different geographical areas, and to know the average number of persons per household in each area. The division of Spain into autonomous regions facilitates this study. Table 2.2. gives the number of households in each autonomous region, the percentages over the total population and the average number of persons aged 14 years and over.

Table 2.2.
Households in the Autonomous Regions

	<i>Nº. of households</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>Totals</i>	<i>11,854,845</i>	<i>100.00</i>	<i>2.88</i>
Andalusia	1,966,746	16.60	3.06
Aragón	397,004	3.34	2.67
Asturias	356,370	3.00	2.68
Balearic Islands	246,279	2.07	2.66
Canary Islands	436,993	3.68	3.28
Cantabria	155,277	1.30	2.96
Castile-La Mancha	509,877	4.30	2.72
Castile-León	801,579	6.76	2.72
Catalonia	1,947,949	16.43	2.77
Valencia	1,212,884	10.23	2.84
Extremadura	317,557	2.67	2.76
Galicia	788,532	6.65	2.98
La Rioja	84,727	0.71	2.77
Madrid	1,545,630	13.03	2.91
Murcia	297,913	2.51	3.04
Navarre	156,501	1.32	2.94
Basque Country	633,027	5.33	2.89

Source: AIMC (1999).

Four autonomous regions show percentages higher than 10% and reach 56.29% of the households⁴⁸. Three autonomous regions reach between 5% and 10%⁴⁹. These 7 autonomous regions accumulate the 75.03% of the households and have the largest potential of time supply.

b) *General data on audience and time*

Audience, refers to the total number of people who accept information at a moment and in a specific market. These people participate in the information market with their time and on occasions, by purchasing the product. From 1992-1997, the audiences of Spanish media experimented changes that are summarized in Table 2.3. The percentages indicate the audience in relation to the population⁵⁰.

Table 2.3.
*Evolution of the General Audience (aged 14+).
Media (1992-1998). (%)*

Year	Population	Dailies	Supplem.	Magazin.	Radio	TV	Cinema
1992	32,000	33.6	36.6	57.9	52.4	89.5	6.9
1993	32,000	36.4	37.9	56.2	52.9	90.1	7.6
1994	32,332	36.8	36.1	54.0	55.4	90.4	7.8
1995	33,576	38.0	33.8	54.7	56.5	91.1	8.3
1996	33,794	38.2	32.9	55.6	56.6	91.3	9.3
1997	33,984	37.2	32.4	54.7	55.0	90.7	8.8
1998	34,132	36.9	31.9	53.2	53.5	89.4	10.2
	[+2,132]	[35.8]	[39.0]	[61.7]	[55.9]	[95.5]	[7.4]
	(+6,7)	(+1.1)	(-7.1)	(-7.5)	(-24)	(-6.1)	(+2.8)

Source: AIMC (1999).

⁴⁸ Andalusia, Catalonia, Valencia, Madrid.

⁴⁹ Castile-León (6.76%); Galicia (6.65%); Basque Country (5.33%).

⁵⁰ As a consequence of readjustments in statistical calculations, the 1992 and 1993 populations are identical.

The six years that comprise Table 2.3 are important in the evolution of Spanish media, and specially for television, which was affected by the legal liberalization process. The last two rows of this table try to respond to the following question: According to the changes in population, if we consider a linear evolution between 1992 and 1998 audience percentages, what distribution would correspond to the 1998 population? Hypothetically, data between square brackets show the figures which would emerge in 1998 from a supposed linear evolution. Data in parentheses would indicate the difference of the same linear evolution between 1992 and 1998.

The percentages of daily press and cinema corresponding to 1998 are above those which hypothetically would correspond to the population of this year in relation with that of 1992. Magazines and supplements have had audience descents in the last few years and the difference with the hypothesis percentage is 7 points lower.

In 1998 and for the fourth consecutive year radio audiences continued to drop; the hypothesis index is 2.4 points higher than that of these years (53.5%).

The average percentage of the television audience dropped in 1997 and 1998 and if compared with the hypothesis percentage that would correspond it in 1998 (95.5%), the difference is less than 6.1 points. This does not exclude it from being the media with the highest audience (89.4%) in the Spanish population aged 14 years and over.

In general, less penetration or audience means less global time supply devoted to information products. In order to discover with more detail the incidence of global data it is necessary to include other variables of analysis, as geographical areas. In this sense, with reference to Spain, Table 2.4. shows the autonomous regions with maximum and minimum audience media percentages.

Table 2.4.

Audience differences in the autonomous regions (1998)

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Dailies	Navarre (61.3)	Castile-La Mancha (19.7)	41.6
Supplem.	Basque Country (58.1)	Canary Islands (11.9)	46.2
Magazines	Cantabria (62.9)	Cast.-La Mancha (41.7)	21.2
Radio (64)	Basque Country	Cast.-La Mancha (39.9)	24.1
Television	Cast.-La Mancha (92.8)	Navarre (85.8)	7.0
Cinema	Madrid (12.6)	Cast.-La Mancha (7.2)	5.4
Internet	Catalonia (8.2)	Cast.-La Mancha (1.2)	7.0

Source: AIMC (1999) and author's own information

The first thing that stands out is certain reciprocity in maximum and minimum audiences with reference to daily newspapers and television. Navarre has the maximum audience in dailies and the minimum in television; Castile-La Mancha with the maximum television audience is the minimum in daily newspaper readership. It is interesting to point out that the Basque Country is the autonomous region with maximum audiences in two sectors, supplements and radio, and that Castile-La Mancha counts with minimum audiences in five of the seven media analyzed.

The data shown so far may serve as a prologue to the study of time offer in the information market. To analyze this aspect, three media are marked out—daily press, radio and television—with 1997 data for daily newspapers, and 1998 for radio and television. The daily time average offered for the dailies was 14 minutes per person, 96 minutes for radio and 222 minutes for television. To mark out the study according to geographical areas, Table 2.5 separates the average times offered in each autonomous region.

Table 2.5.
*Average daily time offered in the autonomous regions
 (1997 & 1998).*
Average in minutes, over the total population

<i>Media</i>	<i>Dailies</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>TV</i>
Average minutes/day	14 (1997)	96 (1998)	222 (1998)
Andalusia	11	91	234
Aragón	14	91	195
Asturias	18	111	206
Balearic Islands	18	80	187
Canary Islands	14	93	195
Cantabria	21	94	233
Castile-La Mancha	8	67	269
Castile-León	15	99	208
Catalonia	16	109	239
Valencia	13	108	235
Extremadura	11	84	235
Galicia	13	90	192
La Rioja	18	97	190
Madrid	13	84	221
Murcia	11	103	216
Navarre	22	110	188
Basque Country	21	107	197

Source: AIMC (1998 & 1999).

The data of the time offered shown in Table 2.5 complete the geographical distribution initiated in the previous table. The penetration differences are reflected in the time offer. Although the daily press data correspond to 1997 and that of radio and television to 1998, compared relations can be established. For example, Navarre with 22 minutes and Castile-La Mancha with 8 minutes have the maximum and minimum of the time offer to the daily press. On the contrary, Castile-La Mancha has the maximum

television time offer (269 minutes), while Navarre with 188 minutes, is closer to the minimum. The difference in the first case is that of 14 minutes daily; in the second, 81 minutes. Because of the singularity of the Balearic Islands, an area with a high tourism quota and a multinational population, the audience data should be considered apart and it would not be coherent to establish comparisons with other autonomous regions.

It can be underlined that of the three media shown in Table 2.5., Catalonia has the maximum time offer (364 minutes daily) followed by Valencia (356 minutes), and Castile-La Mancha (344 minutes). Leaving aside the Balearic Islands for the reasons already mentioned, the order of the inferior time offer corresponds to Galicia (295 minutes) and Aragón (300 minutes).

C) *Time and Tranquility*

The time offer can be realized in different situations and state of mind. One minute is identical to another in duration, but not necessarily in the intensity of the way it is used. Sixty seconds can pass in calm or in anguish, with intellectual energy or in an anodyne manner, without any content. Tranquility positively qualifies a time supply which could be serene and quick, as tranquility and speed are not incompatible in the use of time.

Freedom in the use of time does not mean that its use has to be uncertain or undetermined. There is the time that is freely linked, e.g. to professional tasks or those of a working nature, and there is that time available to cover primary necessities (food, rest, etc.) that does not directly depend on a previous relation linked with third persons or entities. The time available provides the setting for the offers that the people make to cover their information, cultural, entertainment, etc. needs. With a view to analyzing the time offer in the information market, it is interesting to know the thoughts of the people about their situation inasmuch as the lack of the time available or the abundance of time. To this effect and with a general consideration given to Spain, some results of the three questionnaires carried out in 1991, 1993 and 1996 are shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6.
On the time available. %

<i>Date</i>	<i>II-1991</i>	<i>II-1993</i>	<i>I-1996</i>
Total	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)
Lack of time	40	33	43
Excess of time	24	33	31
No lack/excess of T	35	34	26
dnk/dna	1	*	*

Source: CIRES (1997), Table 5.3.

dnk = do not know; dna = do not answer; T = time.

The same number of people (1,200) were questioned in the three years (1991, 1993 and 1996), with different results. The comparison between 1991 and 1996 emphasizes the fact that there is great pressure in the use of time; there was a descent from 35 per cent to 26 per cent in the percentage of answers declaring a state of balance in which there was «no lack or excess of time». During this three-year period the lack of time experimented changes having a lower percentage in 1993 and going up considerably (10 points) in 1996. Retirement before time could have influenced in the time abundance that was 31% in 1996. The three thirds division distribution of 1993 breaks in 1996, in favour of the lack of time.

When there is scarcity of time, tranquility is endangered; hurry and the lack of time seem to go together, although it does not necessarily have to be like this. The data in Table 2.7 somewhat explains the previous data.

Table 2.7.
Way of doing things. %

<i>Date</i>	<i>II-1991</i>	<i>II-1993</i>	<i>I-1996</i>
Total	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)
With haste	38	35	42
With tranquility	58	63	56
dnk/dna	4	2	2

Source: CIRES (1997), Table 5.5.

dnk = do not know; dna = do not answer.

The answers on doing things hurriedly or with tranquility ratify the increase of haste linked with the lack of time; the percentages of the answers given in 1996 practically coincide. Tranquility in the way of doing things reaches 56% which almost coincides with the total of the two concepts of Table 2.6., «excess time» (31%) and «no lack or excess of time» (26%).

Various circumstances may change the situations of «haste» or «tranquility» in people's actions. Among these circumstances, three stand out: age, sex, profession. Table 2.8 marks out these three circumstances and submits them to situations of haste or tranquility. The results of the questionnaire carried out in 1996 offer interesting conclusions which could be later projected on the information market.

Table 2.8.
The way of doing things (a breakdown)

<i>Jan. 1996</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>With haste</i>	<i>With tranquility</i>	<i>dnk/dna</i>
Total	(1,200)	42%	56%	2%
<i>Sex:</i>				
Men	(578)	34%	64%	2%
Women	(622)	50%	48%	2%
<i>Age:</i>				
Under 30	(313)	52%	46%	3%
30-49	(408)	50%	49%	1%
50-64	(259)	38%	59%	3%
Over 65	(220)	18%	81%	1%
<i>Occupation:</i>				
Housewife	(305)	43%	55%	2%
Retired	(215)	19%	81%	—
Student	(102)	58%	40%	2%

Source: CIRES (1997), Table 5.6.

It can be deduced from this table that tranquility in the use of time at the beginning of 1996 was higher in men than in women. Haste imposes itself until the age of 50; tranquility in the use of time increases considerably in people over 50 and reaches 81% in those over 65 years of age. Among the three occupations chosen, it is the student who consumes his time with haste; on the contrary, the housewife and those who enjoy the condition of being retired show greater tranquility.

Does the dilemma of tranquility or haste affect the use of time when reading, listening to or watching these communication media? The questionnaires offer aspects that allow one to know the use of the time devoted to press, radio and television. Table 2.9. gives some negative data, i.e. it reveals the percentages of people who do not dedicate time to the press, radio and television; the last two media are linked together in one column. Three days in the month stand out; the last working day, the last Saturday and the last Sunday.

Table 2.9.
Time dedicated to the media

<i>January 1996</i>	<i>No TV- Radio (%)</i>	<i>No Press (%)</i>	<i>TV Radio minutes</i>	<i>Press Minutes</i>
Last working day	13%	67%	124.4	11.6
Last Saturday	14%	60%	134.4	15.1
Last Sunday	12%	61%	143.5	15.0

Source: CIRES (1997), Table 5.19.

The initial conclusions make the considerable differences between the print and the audiovisual media obvious. Between 12% and 14% of the people questioned said that they did not watch any television or listen to the radio; this means that between 88% and 31.86% gave a positive answer. The three-day time average was 134.1 minutes. The three-day average percentage showed that 62.66% of the people consulted did not read any newspaper, which is an important datum because the three days in question are especially qualified because of the time available. 37.33% declared that they read some newspapers; this is an average readership

time of 13.9 minutes, a time that practically coincides with the average indicated for dailies.

2.1. The reading offer

The time offer to read printed communications is the oldest offer that people made to media entrepreneurs. Ever since Gutenberg invented the printing press with its movable type in 1450 until the beginning of the 20th century, the printed media was the exclusive time demander to provide information to the general public. This primacy was lost in the present century, confirming that radio and television are the media with the greatest capacity of attracting time offers from people.

Understanding a written text implies an intelligence effort. Language plurality means plural reading; whoever is able to read various languages usually starts out in a position of superiority. According to the knowledge of the person, reading forms reading groups, although there are also differences marked by circumstances of age, sex, economic status, culture, spirit, likes, preferences, etc.

To study the time offer to printed media it is convenient to mark out the reading population and the principal type of periodical publications. With effect to the conceptual delimitation of the type of publications, the definitions given by the valid regulations of the Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (OJD) were adopted⁵¹.

51 The present work uses the following definitions of the Reglamento de Trabajo para el Control de Publicaciones de la Oficina para la Justificación de la Difusión (OJD) that were adopted, in a redaction approved by the Consejo de Administración on 27th March, 1996. 5.2.1. Daily Newspaper: «It is a publication edited with the same title, four or more days of the week». 5.2.2. Weekly publication: «It is a publication that is edited once, twice or three times per week». 5.2.3. Fortnightly publication: «It is a publication that is edited every fortnight. A publication edited twice or thrice a month also has this consideration». 5.2.4. Monthly publication: «It is a publication edited every month».

The term «audience» adopts the definition given by the Estudio General de Medios (AIMC) in its methodological report:

The cultural level of a country is determined, among other indexes, by the number of people who read printed media.

Table 2.3 shows the evolution of printed media audience from 1992-1998; it now corresponds to outline the reading time offered by people to the printed media. The analysis uses data of 1997 that refers to periodical publications edited in Spain whose circulation is submitted to the OJD control and AIMC-elaborated audience studies. Table 2.1.1. offers an outline that could serve as a point of departure⁵².

Table 2.1.1.
Reading times of printed media.
Figures in thousands. Time in minutes

Type	Reading (000)	Time (average)	Readers (000)	Average per reader	Average per cap.	Average cap./day
Dailies	18,167	27	12,642	39	14	14
Supplements	16,148	37	11,010	54	18	3
WM	21,737	42	11,834	77	27	4
FM	1,819	42	1,392	55	2	0
MM	28,532	59	12,483	135	50	2

Source: AIMC (1998). Spain, 1997.

WM = weekly magazine; FM = fortnightly magazine; MM = monthly magazine

- a) Daily Newspapers: Those persons who declare having read a daily newspaper the day before are considered its readers. In the particular case of newspapers that do not appear every day, readership is calculated as the average of readership the days of the week this newspaper appears.
- b) Sunday supplements: Those persons who declare having read a certain Sunday supplement during the last 7 days are considered to be readers.
- c) Magazines: Readership of a weekly, fortnightly, or monthly magazine is made up by those persons who declare having read that particular publication in the last week, fortnight, or month, respectively.

52 The Informe Metodológico de AIMC, 1997 calculates *reading time* according to the reading time the persons declare. Averages are calculated with the following class marks:

- less than 15 minutes: 7.5%
- from 15-30 minutes: 22.5%
- from 30-60 minutes: 45%
- from 60-120 minutes: 90%
- more than 120 minutes: 150%

Periodical publications have been classified in five types: dailies, supplements, weekly magazines, fortnightly magazines, monthly magazines. From the perspective of the time they offer or consume, they are object of study according to the following guide lines:

a) The title «reading matter» comprises the reading a person does of the latest edition (day, week, fortnight, month) publication. A publication is taken as a basis and the fact that a person may read any periodical several times (reading parts of it at a time)⁵³. Weekly and monthly magazines offer higher readership figures because of their duration on the market, hence more time to demand reading material.

b) The average time of each reading occasion figures in the third column. Here also the permanence of the publication on the market is reflected in the greater accumulation of reading time, not forgetting that generally the contents of this type of publication offer a later expiry date than the daily press. In view of these times, in the third column one can compare the reader's attention; for example, reading a newspaper which is present a maximum of twenty-four hours on the market occupies an average of 27 minutes, while a weekly magazine occupies 42 minutes a week.

c) The reading matter naturally give higher figures than the readership because a reader may read various publications. The fourth column with the title «readership» indicates the total number of persons estimated to read each type of publication. The figures are the result of applying audience percentages of each type of publication to the potential audience; e.g. the average percentage of daily press penetration in 1997 was 37.2% which when referred to the population of 33,984,000 persons gives a result of 12,642,000 readers.

d) The average time per reader given in the fifth column is the result of relating the data of the second and third columns with the fourth. The fig-

⁵³ The Informe Metodológico de AIMC, 1997 understands by «average reading per copy», the number of reading occasions per copy. This is calculated by the number of different times the support has been read during the last period of publication. As for the term «reading», this is considered to be the contact of a person with a specific support within a determined period of time. Therefore, the number of «reading times» takes into consideration the fact that the same person could have read more than one title.

ures of the reading material divided by that of the readership contribute indexes that when multiplied by the corresponding time averages allow one to know the time estimated per reader.

e) If the readership number is divided by the population, we will have an index. When this index is multiplied by the time average per reader (in minutes) gives as a result the time per head.

f) The last column is devoted to the time per head and day. The calculation has in mind the different publication periodicity; that is why in the newspapers the figure of minutes is identical to that of the previous column.

The study of the time supply in each type of periodical publication has a practical double interest; on the one hand, it enables to have detailed knowledge of the time offer or consumption in the press market; the specific offer made by the readers of each publication; the possible gaps a new publication could fill in; or the new editions of a publication that is already on the market. On the other hand, the advertiser can have data to evaluate the efficiency of the publications with relation to the advertisement he inserts.

The previous considerations allow to advance in the analysis of the time offered in the print media, specifically in the daily press and magazines.

A) *Daily newspapers*

A question can open the analysis: does the average time devoted to reading the daily press in Spain increase or decrease? To get closer to an answer two studies, carried out in a twelve-year interval —1983 and 1995—, could serve as a guide.

The CISE⁵⁴ analyzes the reading time and frequency of Spanish newspapers in 1983, and the results are summarized in Table 2.1.2.

⁵⁴ CISE. INVESTIGACIONES SOCIOECONÓMICAS, S.L., *Estudio sobre la lectura de prensa en España*, carried out for the Asociación de Editores de Diarios Españoles (AEDE), Madrid, mayo, 1983.

Table 2.1.2.
Time dedicated to reading a newspaper (%)

<i>Minutes</i>	<i>Habitual reading %</i>	<i>Occasional reading %</i>
-15	17	19
15-30	31	30
31-45	23	21
46-60	15	13
over 60	13	4
NC		4
Average	35	34

Source: CISE (1983)

NC = no comment

Thirty-one per cent of the people questioned said that they read a daily newspaper and that they spent between 15 and 30 minutes in doing so. This is the highest percentage and if added to the previous percentage (readers who spend less than 15 minutes and who represent 17%) or the percentage immediately below (between 30 and 45 minutes, representing 23%), in both cases give a result which is about half the total number of readers. A similar situation offered the answers of the people who declared that they were occasional readers of daily newspapers. On the other hand, the average in minutes over the total is practically the same, 35 and 34 minutes.

Twelve years later, in 1995, Media Planning⁵⁵ released the results obtained after interviewing 1,507 persons, with the aim of getting an estimation of the reading time of the daily press. The results in percentages figure in Table 2.1.3.

⁵⁵ MEDIA PLANNING S.A., *Estudio del impacto publicitario en prensa diaria*, Madrid, febrero 1995.

Table 2.1.3
Time spent on reading the daily press (1995)

<i>Minutes</i>	<i>%</i>
-15	13.5
15-30	36.2
31-60	30.4
61-120	15.3
Over 120	4.6

Source: Media Planning S.A.

As can be seen in the table, the evolution of time offered by the readers experimented small changes, specially when making a global consideration. The sum of the percentages corresponding to times lower than 15 minutes and between 15 and 30 minutes is 49.7%, i.e. the result also in this analysis is half the number of readers.

Two years later in 1997, AIMC data facilitated a detailed analysis. Table 2.1.4. gives the reading times of the daily newspapers classified under three types of contents: general information, economic information, sports information.

Table 2.1.4.
Time spent on reading the daily press. (1997)

<i>Dailies</i>	<i>Total base (000)</i>	<i>< de 15 minutes %</i>	<i>15-30 minutes %</i>	<i>30-60 minutes %</i>	<i>60-120 minutes %</i>	<i>Over 120 Minutes %</i>	<i>Average minutes %</i>
Total n°. dailies	18,161	35.2	33.1	15.8	8.1	7.4	35.8
GI	13,845	33.5	33.0	16.4	8.6	8.1	37.4
EI	135	31.5	39.2	13.9	5.3	10.1	37.3
SI	4,181	40.4	33.4	14.0	6.3	5.0	30.1

Source: EGM-AIMC.

GI = General Information; EI = Economic Information; SI = Sports Information.

Some comments on the information given in Table 2.1.4.:

a) Out of a total population of 18,161,000, daily newspapers on general information cover 76.2%; those on economic information cover 0.8% and those dailies that give sports information, 23.0%.

b) The reading time averages of these three types of newspapers do not have any proportion with the population they correspond with. There is an analogous offer in those daily newspapers covering general information and economic information, while the time average in sports information dailies is less in 7 minutes. The total average of 35.8 minutes follows the 1983 (Table 2.1.2) and 1995 (Table 2.1.3.) patterns. However, there is a significant change with relation to the 1995 data; in this year, 49.7% of the readers spent 30 minutes or less on reading a daily newspaper, while in 1997 the averages for these times totaled 68.3%. It appears that there are more readers who read a daily newspaper in less time.

c) The previous considerations require an explanation. The dailies with national circulation and areas of coverage have a portion of readership that also reads another local or regional newspaper. The national daily newspaper is usually the second daily read and usually occupies less time than the principal one. This factor is more pronounced in dailies covering general information.

d) Daily newspapers devoted to economic information have a population readership that is considerably inferior to the other two types of dailies. But as the economic information daily contains information that is frequently linked to professional work, they accumulate times that are both intense and extensive in readership; this is shown by the 10.1% of readers who spend two hours or more to reading this type of daily.

e) Sports information dailies have the highest concentration of readers who spend 30 minutes or less, 73.8%. It is significant that 40.4% of these readers offer less than 15 minutes of reading time and can be explained by the configuration of this type of daily with a style and information presentation that enables fast reading, facilitated by photographs and the use of large-letter typography.

Time distribution according to the types of daily newspapers gives an initial idea that could be an object of analysis with reference to special

publications. To this effect, Table 2.1.5. gathers the times of eight dailies, five on general information and three on sports information. Each daily with a readership higher than half a million readers covers a population of 8,314,000, 45% of the population considered in the previous table.

Table 2.1.5
Time spent in reading newspapers (1997)

Dailies	Total base (000)	< de 15 minutes %	15-30 minutes %	30-60 minutes %	60-120 minutes %	Over 120 Minutes %	Average minutes %
<i>Marca</i> (SI)	2,527	41.4	33.3	13.7	6.5	4.6	29.7
<i>El País</i> (GI)	1,463	23.1	32.1	21.3	11.9	11.3	46.3
<i>El Mundo</i> (GI)	1,007	26.7	31.5	22.6	9.8	9.2	42.0
<i>El Periódico</i> (GI)	988	28.3	33.0	19.6	9.7	9.0	40.8
<i>La Vanguardia</i> (GI)	663	29.8	30.7	18.5	10.3	10.6	42.8
<i>El Correo Esp.</i> (GI)	576	36.0	22.6	19.8	9.6	11.5	42.8
<i>Sport</i> (SI)	555	41.4	31.2	14.9	6.2	6.1	31.5
<i>As</i> (SI)	535	39.4	35.4	14.2	6.6	3.9	29.3

Source: AIMC, Noticias de la Comunicación, XII-1998, p. 132.

GI = general information; SI = sports information.

Some comments suggested by the above data:

a) The notable reading time differences between dailies with different contents, e.g. between two newspapers of the same publishing company: *El País* (46.3 minutes) and *As* (29.3 minutes) are confirmed. Differences were less when dailies with the same type of contents were compared.

b) A higher reading time average does not necessarily mean a higher reading time offer. The daily sports newspaper *Marca* accumulates a total average of 1,250,865 hours (equivalent to 31,272 working weeks of 40 hours each), while *El País* (a general information daily) receives an inferior offer from its readers: 1,128,948 hours.

c) The dailies on general information included in this table have reading times that are much higher than the average of 37.4 minutes (cf. Table 2.1.4). On the other hand, it has been confirmed that between 72% and 74% of the readers of three sports information dailies offer 30 minutes or less to the reading of a newspaper.

d) Time distribution has singular characteristics in general information dailies that counts with ample local or regional circulation. To this effect, *El Correo Español* and *La Vanguardia* have high time percentages in the segments of less than 15 minutes and more than two hours.

B) Magazines

The Spanish magazine market presents study difficulties for various reasons, as underlined by Cabello⁵⁶. Firstly, there is a concurrence on the market of magazines with different periodicity: weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, etc. Secondly, the contents of these publications are varied and more specialized. Lastly, the number of these publications is high, the circulation of the majority is not submitted to OJD control and their readership or their advertising are not analyzed by entities such as the AIMC or InfoAdex.

These reasons suggest limiting the study on the reading time offer to the weekly publications under OJD control, following the AIMC quantified data as far as readership is concerned.

The average reading time for weekly magazines is figured in 77 minutes; this time should be considered as a global estimation, adding the limitation of the various contents also offered by these weeklies. To the effect of time analysis and keeping in mind the magazine data given in previous tables, it is interesting to delimit the time offer in the different autonomous regions. Table 2.1.6 gathers these data that allow, among other things, to arrive at the following conclusions:

⁵⁶ For a more complete study, see CABELLO, Fernando (1999), *El mercado de revistas en España. Concentración Informativa*, Ediciones Ariel, Barcelona.

Table 2.1.6.
*Magazine reading time distribution
 in the autonomous regions. (1997)*

<i>Autonomous Region</i>	<i>Population 14 +</i>	<i>Audience %</i>	<i>Readership</i>	<i>Minutes/weekly reading</i>
Average		54.7		77
Andalusia	5,965,841	47.6	2,839,740	218,660,004
Aragón	1,059,559	54.6	578,519	44,545,979
Asturias	955,179	62.8	599,852	46,188,636
Balearic Islands	650,640	65.7	427,470	32,915,227
Canary Islands	1,410,419	60.1	847,662	65,269,960
Cantabria	458,618	60.9	279,298	21,505,974
Cast.-La Mancha	1,384,397	42.3	585,600	45,091,195
Castile-León	2,185,805	52.9	1,156,291	89,034,395
Catalonia	5,372,961	61.6	3,309,744	254,850,286
Valencia	3,427,996	61.2	2,097,934	161,540,884
Extremadura	875,002	42.9	375,376	28,903,941
Galicia	2,347,716	43.4	1,018,909	78,455,973
La Rioja	234,335	49.1	115,058	8,859,503
Madrid	4,465,967	56.6	2,527,737	194,635,774
Murcia	898,801	52.9	475,466	36,610,861
Navarre	458,669	53.7	246,305	18,965,504
Basque Country	1,832,596	60.4	1,106,888	85,230,375
Total	33,984,501		18,587,850	1,431,264,472

Source: AIMC (1998).

a) The highest magazine readership corresponds to the Balearic Islands with a 65.7% penetration over the potential population, and a time supply that represents 2.3% of the total. This primacy can be explained by the singular conditions of this geographical area, with a high acquisitive level and a strong attraction capacity for tourism that makes it an exceptional area of leisure, rest and entertainment for people from different countries.

b) The four autonomous regions with audience indexes higher than 60%⁵⁷ make up 30.6% of the total population, have an average audience of 61.8% and accumulate 34.6% of the time offered. These four regions constitute the first group as a whole in as far as the time offer. On the opposite side are the five autonomous regions with readership indexes under 50%⁵⁸, which cover 32.4% of the total population and show an average readership audience of 44.7% that assumes 26.5% of the time offered by the weeklies.

The previous data should be interpreted from a global perspective. For a detailed study it is necessary to analyze specific contents. For example, in the area of weekly magazines with economic and financial content, reading times are high as shown in Table 2.1.11, with reference to the British publication *The Economist*.

Table 2.1.7
Average time spent reading «The Economist»

Time	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	15
1-1.5 hrs.	21
1.5-2 hrs.	17
2-3 hrs.	28
3 hours +	18

Source: *The Economist. World Profile. 1990.*

It is interesting to underline that 38% of the readers weekly offer between 60 and 120 minutes while 46% spend more than two hours. These are offers high in time and in the socio-economic level of the readers.

In the Spanish market of economic magazines the averages are also high, although it is necessary to point out that the term «reader» in this case is

⁵⁷ Balearic Islands, Asturias, Catalonia, Valencia.

⁵⁸ Andalusia, Castile-La Mancha, Extremadura, La Rioja.

stricter than in other magazines, with higher times; the latter are also meant to be read but to an extent seem to be destined to have their contents just looked at. Table 2.1.8. gathers data of average reading times of four Spanish magazines.

Table 2.1.8.
Time spent reading economic weeklies in Spain

<i>Title</i>	<i>Average minutes per reader</i>
<i>Actualidad Económica</i>	51
<i>Inversión</i>	50
<i>Dinero</i>	49
<i>El nuevo Lunes</i>	49

Source: *Directivos '96*

These time offers, compared with those of Table 2.1.7, reveal the differences. However, the time offered by the four Spanish magazines is almost the same.

The time spent on reading economic and financial sections has a special significance in public opinion influence spheres, with advertising repercussions. An interesting study has been carried out by Drummond⁵⁹ on the acceptance and reading times of the economic sections in the Saturday and Sunday editions of some British dailies. Table 2.1.9. reproduces percentages of acceptance levels and the time employed in reading economic sections that, on occasions, are linked to the sports section.

⁵⁹ Drummond, Alison (1998), p. 20.

Table 2.1.9.
Reading time in the UK

Publication	Finance and business sections	
	% Sections	Minutes
Times 2 (with sports news)	92	27
Sunday Times Business (with sports news)	76	23
Daily Telegraph Business News	68	17
Sunday Telegraph Business	67	21
Sunday Times Personal Finance	66	21
Observer Business	63	25
Independent on Sunday Business	61	18
Mail on Sunday Financial Mail	53	19
Saturday average	80	22
Sunday average	64	21
Section average	68	21

Source: Sections'95, *Express Newspapers*/Leo Burnett/COI. Cf. Aliso Drummond. Admap. January/1998, p. 20.

- Joining economic and sports contents seems to offer greater acceptance and time quota.
- There are considerable differences in the acceptance levels: 39 points between the maximum and minimum. With regard to time, the maximum differences were 10 minutes.
- The acceptance average was higher on Saturdays than on Sundays with a difference of 16 points, but it does not follow this pattern in the average time that is limited to a minute's difference.
- The average acceptance and time percentages were high: 68% acceptance and 21 minutes of time.

2.2. The listening offer

A person who listens consumes time and sometimes, also patience. In the information market the time offer to listen —not only to hear— is directed towards the companies or entities that, in an organized way, distribute products and services characterized by forms of expression where the protagonist is the coherent sound, voice or music. Record companies and especially broadcasting companies attract the time offered by persons who by listening satisfy their information, culture, entertainment, etc. necessities⁶⁰.

Time that is consumed in listening can be time compatible with activities in which other senses —sight, taste, touch— participate. It is time that allows for the realization of various tasks and on occasions, it makes them easier or more accessible because human intelligence finds rest in listening to music, recorded sounds of nature, etc.

The voice becomes speech when the sound articulated communicates itself. A word is a sonorous sign, a manifestation of human relationship. Sounds that articulate words or convert notes into music can be heard or listened to; in the first case there is slight perception; in the second, it expresses attention. Voices and noises, sounds and words surround the time that people voluntarily dedicate (or not) to hear and to listen. There is no lack of people who miss the absence of noise, perhaps because they ignore the value of silence.

The radio is, by excellence, the best medium to accept timeslot offers and from very different places. How can time that is devoted to the radio market be classified in the time offer/demand relation? According to Conde, the radio medium is made up of various types of times: a) *historical* time, that provides a setting for current events, with an expression in the radio,

60 For the meaning of time on the radio see Conde, Fernando (1997). This author sets off from the *space/time* coordinates as the axis of the research on media. The *exterior* medium is characterized by its spaciousness; the *written* medium, by its temporal note although space predominates; both notes (temporal and spacial) participate in the *television* medium; the *radio* medium, is the medium linked, almost exclusively, to the temporal note. cf. pp. 92-93.

a news supplier. b) *cyclic* time, submitted to the natural cycle of days, weeks, diurnal and nocturnal hours, etc.; c) *institutional* time is a result of the legal order of time in working time, rest, trips; d) *biographical* or *generational* time, proper to different ages with different likes or interests; e) *personal* time that responds to individual situations, state of mind, likes, etc.; and f) specific time to listen to the radio, or the *listener's interaction time* with the radio, in which the times mentioned before incide⁶¹. The listener's interaction time will be determined by the moment at which an adaptation is produced «between the listener's inner time and the proper programming time, in the coupling, in the connection between the times mentioned»⁶².

The time offer is directed towards destinations partly delimited by the technical conditions of the support that demands them or by the product or broadcasting contents. We selected two types of radio frequencies, AM and Modulated Frequency (FM) and two types of broadcasts with somewhat different programming, Conventional Radio (RC) and Formula Radio (FR). What times can be attributed to these two types of broadcasts?

In principle it can be said that Conventional Radio attracts time that looks at collective interests, classified before as «historical», «cyclic», «institutional». In Radio Formula there is predominance of times that satisfy classified individual likes such as those of a «biographical» and «personal» nature⁶³.

Although in a global consideration the time offer for the radio has not experimented important changes through the last few years, there have been significant time redistributions, both in AM and FM as well as in the offer to CR and FR. Table 2.2.1. reflects the audience evolution from 1992 to 1997.

61 Id., pp. 97-99.

62 Id., p. 105.

63 Id., p. 101.

Table 2.2.1.
Percentage of radio audience evolution (1992-1998)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>AM</i>	<i>FM</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>FR</i>
1992	52.4	16.5	39.4	35.7	21.1
1993	52.9	18.2	38.5	37.3	19.9
1994	55.4	18.0	41.1	36.1	24.8
1995	56.5	17.9	42.3	38.7	23.7
1996	56.6	16.5	43.2	36.5	24.3
1997	55.0	14.9	42.7	34.2	24.4
1998	53.5	12.8	42.6	32.2	24.6

Source: AIMC (1999).

CR = conventional radio; FR = formula radio.

The total audience ⁶⁴ increased very slightly; the maximum was 4.2. points in 1996 with relation to 1992. Audience descent in AM, 1.6. points

64 The definitions adopted by the AIMC in its Informe Metodológico, 1997 were assumed.

- a) Accumulated audience: The number of people (expressed in absolutes or in percentage over the population) who declared to have listened to a specific support for at least a half an hour interval.
- b) Average audience: an average number of persons (expressed in absolutes or in percentage over the population) who have listened to a certain support throughout the specified period. It is calculated by questioning each listener about his respective listening time. One can also obtain it as an arithmetic average of listeners who have each of the half hours that conform the period in question. This indicator expressed in percentage (rating) is equivalent to the percentage that consumption «per head» signifies of the total duration of the temporal interval considered.
- c) Listening minutes: In relation to a support and a specific period, it expresses the average consumption per person. This consumption can be «per head» (referring to the total population) or «per listener» (restricted to the part of the population that has declared to some listening).
- d) Participation or Share: it expresses the distribution of listening according to supports during a period of time. For each of the supports, the percentage quotient is calculated between its average audience and the average audience of the total media or, in an equivalent way, between the consump-

in 1997 with relation to 1992, can partly be explained as an audience transfer to FM which in the same period increased 3.3. points.

A certain continuity qualifies the audience distribution period in CR and FR. The maximum differences between 1992 and 1997 were 4.5. points for CR, and 4.4. for FR. Audience increase in FR can be understood as a step forward in the time offer to listen to broadcasts with specialized contents, e.g. musicals.

Table 2.2.2.
Evolution of the time offer in Spain (1992-1998).
Average in minutes

Year	Total	CR	FR
1992	105	67	38
1993	108	72	36
1994	103	62	40
1995	101	64	36
1996	102	61	38
1997	100	58	39
1998	96	52	40

Source: AIMC (1999).

CR = conventional radio; FR = formula radio.

The time offer to listen to music lent an impetus to the growth of FR. On the other hand, listening to music from the car facilitated the offer for en-

tion of the support «per head» and the consumption of the media «per head». The 100% bases for the calculation of the participations used are the following:

- For supports included in «Conventional»: Total Conventional.
 - For supports included in «Formula»: Total Formula.
 - For Total Conventional and Total Formula: Total number of Listeners.
- e) Penetration: number of listeners expressed in the percentage over the population.

tainment or tranquility or, on the contrary for acceleration which in both cases the music could motivate.

The stabilization or slight descent in the time offer for the radio could be a consequence of new time offers in favour of other media that also need to be listened to (e.g. compact discs), as well as changes in the distribution of the time available which is now orientated towards different ways of personal entertainment (walking, practising sports, etc.). On the whole, it appears that music gains time at the cost of words although in absolute figures, words manage to attract more audience.

The evolution of time given in Table 2.2.2. is significant; in 1992 CR attracted 64% of the time offer while FR, 36%. Six years later, in 1998 the differences were reduced: CR reached 57% and FR, 43%.

The offer for the radio counts with especially favourable times that are within the four traditional sections of morning, midday, evening and night. In each of these periods there are timeslot sections that distribute the relation of the time offer and demand throughout the day and proportion contents that satisfy or try to satisfy the necessities of the listeners. Table 2.2.3. summarizes the daily average offer or consumption of radio minutes in four timeslots.

Table 2.2.3.
Average daily consumption of radio.
Average in minutes over the total population (1998)

<i>Sectors</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>M-F</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Total		95.8	52.0	39.8	106.2	73.1	66.8
Morning	(06:00-12:00)	39.9	22.7	15.8	46.2	29.4	19.2
Midday	(12:00-16:00)	18.9	8.4	9.5	20.6	17.5	12.1
Evening	(16:00-20:00)	16.5	7.0	8.5	17.6	10.1	17.2
Night	(20:00-06:00)	20.5	13.8	6.0	21.8	16.1	18.3

Source: AIMC (1999).

CR = conventional radio; FR = formula radio; M-F = Mondays to Fridays,

It can be verified that the «morning» section with six hours (6.00-12.00) has the largest offer not only in absolute figures but also in the offer per hour. If the total number of minutes are divided by the number of hours that comprise this timeslot, the result is an index of 6.65. For the «mid-day» section the index was 4.72 and 4.12 for the «evening» section, while the ten hours of the «night» section gave an index of 2.05.

The largest offer corresponds from Mondays to Fridays, with a daily average of 106.2 minutes. Saturdays and Sundays have inferior offers. Once more it was verified that for the time available on weekends other kinds of entertainment were sought.

As for the total offer distribution, 61.4% of the time was offered in the 10 hours covered by the «morning» and «midday» sections; the remaining 38.6 % corresponds to the 14 hours that comprise the «evening» and «night» sections. The largest offer difference was in the «morning» section, from Monday to Friday (46.2 average minutes) and Sunday (19.2 average minutes).

From where is the time offer carried out? In principle there are three qualified places for radio audition: the household, the place of work and the car. Table 2.2.4. presents total consolidated data, according to AIMC, that refer to one day.

The preferent place of time offer continues being the household while the place of work occupies the second place. The timeslot selection that has been done to draw up this table and the permanence, during these hours, in each one of the three sites mentioned influence this distribution.

Table 2.2.4
*Radio consumption according to type of broadcast
 and the listening site. %.*
Consolidation day. Audience in percentages. (1998)

<i>Audience</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>House hold</i>	<i>Work</i>	<i>Car</i>	<i>Other</i>
Accumulated	53.5	32.2	24.6	42.7	5.9	8.9	1.1
Participation	100.0	54.3	41.6	67.5	21.3	9.4	1.8

Source: AIMC (1999)

CR = conventional radio; FR = formula radio.

Over 55% of the average audience, the accumulated audience shows that the household is the place where the highest time offers for the radio are formulated. With an ample difference, the car occupies the second place and in the third place, the working site. However, it is likely that a more exhaustive analysis of radio listening in cars could put up its percentage considerably.

2.3. The watching offer

That expressing a reality with words usually falls short can be shown with the verb «to see»: it means to perceive with one's eyes all that light allows, but it is a great deal more. With our vision we capture entertainment images, unexpected news which abounds in the information society, as well as contents of informative products and services whose aim is to be seen by an every increasing public. The television stands out among the media that currently manage to attract a larger offer of *watching time*.

It is estimated that Europeans offer to the television between one third and half of the time they have while at home⁶⁵. Watching television is one of the most frequent activities⁶⁶; however, there are signs of a slow de-

⁶⁵ Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 48.

⁶⁶ CIRES (1997), p. 366.

cline because of an increase in the number of persons who would like to reduce the time they spend watching television⁶⁷.

To analyze audiences and the time people offer the television, three sources were used: Estudio General de Medios de AIMC⁶⁸, Sofres Audiencia de Medios⁶⁹, and InfoAdex⁷⁰.

67 Id., pp. 411, 416, 427.

68 The following are some concepts taken from the Informe Metodológico de AIMC (1997), with reference to television:

- a) Accumulated audience: the number of people (expressed in absolutes or in percentage over the population) who have seen a certain television support during at least a half an hour interval.
- b) Minutes of television watched: In relation to a television support and a specific period, it expresses the average consumption per person. This average covers the total population.
- c) Audience average: The average number of people (expressed in absolutes or in percentage over the population) who have seen a certain television support throughout a specific period. This is calculated by questioning each spectator about his respective television watching time. It can also be obtained as an arithmetic average of the persons who have each of the half hours that make up the period in question. This indicator expressed in percentage (rating) is equivalent to the percentage (rating) that the average consumption signifies over the total duration of the temporal interval considered.
- d) Fidelity index: Percentage quotient between the audience average and the accumulated audience. Its maximum value is 100 (which reflects a total stability of the audience).
- e) Participation or share: expresses the distribution of the television support during a period of time. For each of the supports the quotient percentage between its average audience and the average audience of the total media is calculated, or in an equivalent way between the average consumption of the support and the average consumption of the media.
- f) Contribution: In audience distributions according to timeslots, it is the percentage that signifies the average audience of the support or of the total medium of that timeslot over the day's total. Naturally the sum of all the timeslots of the day for the same support should be 100.
- g) Profile: Percentage distribution of the audience through the different categories of one or various variables. The sum of the data for all the categories of one variable should be 100%, except for differences attributable to rounding up, the categories of the variable should not be separated (as in the variable family role which allows the same person to be a *housewife*

How does the time offer for television evolve? Table 2.3.1. summarizes the average penetration percentages and the number of spectators from the period 1992-1998.

Table 2.3.1.
Evolution of the television audience (1992-1998)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (in 000)</i>	<i>Penetration %</i>	<i>Audience (in 000)</i>
1992	32,000	89.5	28,640
1993	32,000	90.1	28,832
1994	32,332	90.4	29,228
1995	33,576	91.1	30,588
1996	33,794	91.3	30,854
1997	33,984	90.7	30,823
1998	34,132	89.4	30,514

Source: AIMC (1999).

a) The television is, with an ample margin, the medium that receives the largest time offer. In 1998 the average penetration was 89.40% over the AIMC population of 34,132,027, which means 30,514,032 spectators.

and the *head of the family*), or that all the categories should not be con-
signed in the report. When what is distributed is the accumulated audience
this is denominated a *simple profile* and if this refers to the average audi-
ence it is known as a *pondered profile*.

h) Penetration: Number of spectators expressed in percentage over the popu-
lation.

69 The populations analyzed by EGM and Sofres are different. EGM takes, as a
basis, a population made up of persons aged 14 years and over, while Sofres
analyzes a population aged 3 years and over.

70 InfoAdex, S.A. is a limited liability company constituted in 1994 by the union
of the two companies that proportioned services to Adex (Advertising Expen-
diture), and the qualitative and quantitative control of advertixing insertions:
Duplo and Repress Nielsen. The object of this Ltd. is the control and analysis
of advertising activity. InfoAdex, through A.C. Nielsen, forms part of the
Adex group of companies.

b) In the 1992-1998 period the population increased by 6.6% and the number of spectators went up by 6.5%, according to the data in Table 2.3.1. The highest average audience index (91.3%) was achieved in 1996.

c) The audience descent began in 1997 and continued in 1998, the year that registered the lowest percentage since 1992. In 1998 the number of spectators was lower than that in the period 1995-1997. If the population/spectator relation in 1997 is taken as a basis and projected on the 1998 population, a total number of 30,957,000 spectators would correspond to it, i.e. 443,000 more than the figure it actually reaches. Does this mean that the tendency is to continue going down? With reference to the spectators, bearing in mind the age pyramid, it appears that the answer should be affirmative. This has an incidence on the possibilities of the time offer to television, although not absolutely as a smaller number of spectators can, at least in theory, make a larger time offer.

d) Does a saturation of the time offer exist? According to the way the television market in Spain is currently made up, it can be said that saturation does exist. However, this does not mean that there could be time redistributions in favour of our audiovisual services through the television support, above all if this incorporates itself or is incorporated to a computer screen.

The time offer to watch television is diverse according to geographical areas and the socio-economic situation of the audience. Table 2.3.2 has been drawn up on audience and time distribution variables according to the autonomous regions, with reference to 1997 and 1998.

Table 2.3.2.
*Audience and time in television, in the autonomous regions
 (1997-1998)*

<i>Autonomous region</i>	<i>1998 Audience %</i>	<i>1998 Minutes/day</i>	<i>1997 Audience %</i>	<i>1997 Minutes/day</i>
Averages	89.4	222	90.7	231
Andalusia	90.2	234	91.7	248
Aragón	87.3	195	90.5	233
Asturias	90.4	206	88.8	190
Balearic Islands	87.3	187	90.0	209
Canary Islands	85.4	195	89.5	208
Cantabria	91.2	233	92.7	249
Castile-La Mancha	92.8	269	93.0	264
Castile-León	88.8	208	89.0	204
Catalonia	91.3	239	92.6	254
Valencia	92.0	235	93.2	253
Extremadura	88.3	235	92.3	256
Galicia	86.5	192	88.5	197
La Rioja	88.7	190	96.4	222
Madrid	86.5	221	87.1	216
Murcia	87.1	216	90.8	224
Navarre	85.8	188	87.0	198
Basque Country	88.4	197	89.8	200

Source: AIMC (1998-1999)

a) How can it be deduced from the data in Table 2.3.2. that audience and time variables do not have a direct relationship between them, since a higher audience percentage does not necessarily correspond with more media time offered. However, in absolute figures there exists a natural relation of a larger audience corresponding with a higher total time being offered.

b) In 1998 there was a general decline in the time offer. Among the autonomous regions that reduced their time offer, in relation to 1997, was

Aragón (38 minutes), La Rioja (32 minutes) and the Balearic Islands (22 minutes).

c) Only one autonomous region —Asturias— had a higher penetration percentage in 1998 with relation to 1997. Asturias also increased its time offer with an average of 16 minutes. Other autonomous regions that offered more time in 1998 than in 1997 were: Castile-León (4 minutes), Madrid (5 minutes), and Castile-La Mancha (5 minutes). The last region had the highest time offer to television with a daily average of 269 minutes, 4 hours and 29 minutes.

d) The previous data leads to the conclusion that in the variations of the time offered, the socio-economic conditions of the audience in every geographical area have a special influence. Working situations and population age levels also have a special incidence. Unemployment reduction, on the one hand, and pre-retirements on the other are factors that contribute in modifying the time offer. Generational changes and the new time distribution spent on entertainment or leisure activities also have an influence.

e) In relation to what has been previously stated it is significant that in 1998 only one autonomous region had an offer to television that was higher than 4 hours a day, while in 1997 there were six autonomous regions with offers higher than this amount of time. It is also interesting to underline that over an offer measurement of 222 minutes, 6 autonomous regions had the highest times⁷¹.

How is the time offer distributed along the week? In a global consideration, leaving aside differences related with the seasons of the year and especially the summer, Table 2.3.3. orders the minutes of the weekly offers with a breakdown from Mondays to Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The timeslot distribution is grouped in the usual four blocks: morning, mid-day, evening and night.

71 Andalusia: 234 min.; Cantabria: 233 min.; Castile-La Mancha: 269 min.; Catalonia: 239; Valencia: 235 min.; Extremadura: 235 min.

Table 2.3.3.
Average daily time offer, in minutes, to television (1998)

<i>Days of the week</i>	<i>Total Mon.-Sun.</i>	<i>Mon.-Fri.</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Total	222.2	231.8	198.6	197.8
Morning (04:00-13:00)	11.9	12.8	8.6	11.1
Midday (13:30-17:00)	62.2	67.1	51.0	48.4
Evening (17:00-20:00)	32.0	32.2	31.1	32.1
Night (20:00-04:00)	116.1	119.7	107.9	106.2

Source: AIMC (1999).

a) The weekdays (Mondays to Fridays) attract the largest time offer, with an average of 232 minutes a day. This average amount of time has a relative value because the offers, from an individual point of view, are varied according to the status and the situation of the people. The offer descends nearly half-an-hour on the weekends, which is a symptom that the time available on Saturdays and Sundays is orientated towards other kinds of leisure.

b) As for time distribution according to timeslots, the «night» timeslot (20.00-4.00 hrs.) assumes the largest amount on all the days of the week, and when added to the «midday» timeslot gives a total of 178.3 minutes that represents 80.2% of the total average time offered.

The influence the seasons have on the time offered to television has interesting aspects. Taking the Sofres data as a basis over a population of 38,279,000 aged 3 years and over, Table 2.3.4. shows the distribution (in minutes) that the audience offered during the months of 1997.

Table 2.3.4.
*Daily time offer, in minutes, made to television
(breakdown in months)*

Month	Morning	After lunch	Evening	Night	Early morning	Total
January	25	53	54	88	22	244
February	24	49	48	85	21	227
March	24	46	42	79	20	211
April	24	48	41	78	21	212
May	24	48	40	74	21	208
June	24	49	40	69	21	202
July	24	45	35	57	19	180
August	20	39	31	48	16	154
September	24	48	38	67	19	195
October	26	49	41	78	18	212
November	26	52	51	85	20	233
December	26	51	52	83	23	235
Year	24	48	43	74	20	209

Source: Sofres⁷².

A) The *time of the offer* has an importance on the *offer of time*. As can be deduced from the data included in Table 2.3.4., from an annual consideration there are three months with a low offer that in the northern hemisphere, coincides with the summer period. August, July and September (in this order), are the months with the lowest time offer to television, because during this period leisure and entertainment alternatives gain special force and attract more time from people. However, only August had a time offer with an average below three hours. The largest difference, 90

⁷² According to the Sofres audimetry controls, over a population that included people aged 3 years and over (38,279,000), the average was 209 minutes. According to this same criterion, the averages in the previous years were: 1992:194; 1993:204; 1994:210; 1995:211; 1996:214. Cf. *Noticias de la Comunicación*, nº 166, Enero 1998, pp. 20 & ss.

minutes, was between the time offered in January (244 minutes) and that of August (154 minutes).

b) The offer is affected by the seasons and can be grouped into two periods: on one hand, the months from October to April, with time offered that is over an annual average of 209 minutes; on the other hand, the months from May to September have times that are lower than the annual average. These two time periods have a direct repercussion on advertising contracts and programming contents.

c) The offers in the timeslot denominated «night» show the highest time differences throughout the year. In January 88 minutes were offered, while August had 40 minutes less. The other timeslots had smaller differences: in the «morning», the maximum difference was 6 minutes, «after lunch», 14 minutes, in the «evening», 23 minutes and at «dawn», 7 minutes.

3. The time demand

The people who participate, in the information market with their products or services demand time from persons to consume press, radio, television contents, etc. In specific terms, this demand is expressed in the request for hours, minutes or seconds with the aim of satisfying information necessities in its widest scope (news, knowledge, events, judgements, ideas, data, entertainment, etc.). If there is no answer to the time demand, the informative activity is unsuccessful. This demand is instrumented through the circulation of various products according to the media nature: circulation through publication (press), broadcasting (radio and television), and exhibition (cinema, billboards), etc.

The process of the time demand has its origin in the elaboration phase of the informative product or service, followed by its circulation, and is culminated when it reaches the potential consumer who either accepts or refuses to «hand over» his time.

Demanding time is common to many activities that provide services (with or without a profit intention), which could be of a burdensome or free of charge nature. In organizations without a profit intention, the time demand is usually one of the requirements for people to get involved in tasks that are frequently of an immaterial nature (welfare, charitable, etc.).

In relation to the information market, the time demand has the following characteristics (among others): instantaneity, variety, compression, concentrated ownership and specialized contents, and increasing growth.

a) *Instantaneity*. The time demand/offer relationship is usually formalized instantly without delay. The circulation of the informative product, its edition, broadcast or exhibition implies formulating a demand that usually receives an immediate response. This response can be negative or

affirmative, frequently materialized in a physical action like opening a newspaper, watching a certain television channel or tuning into a radio station, etc. The instantaneousness in question does not always answer an offer/demand relationship on specific informative contents because, at most times, these are unknown; precisely this ignorance is the basis of the time offer. Usually the demand is made through generic programmes, publication titles, etc that cover ample information and entertainment sections: news, sports, computer technology, entertainment shows, competitive shows.

b) *Variety*. Passing in front of a newsagent, moving the radio dial, watching at programmes of television channels, making a simple navigation in internet, are acts that show the great variety of the time demand on the information market. There is a demand for products that are very different in contents, prices, periodicity, or because they are apparently free of charge, etc. On the other hand, time that is an object of demand varies according to the nature of the product or service. Reading requires time and a specific mental intensity, while a television programme whose content is a competitive show demands a different kind of time. Although all minutes are made up of sixty seconds, the way of filling up these minutes can be different.

c) *Compression*. Among the characteristics of the time demand the desire to compress it stands out, both the time employed to elaborate the content of the product as well as that used to make it reach the potential consumer. The action and the compression effect are present in all the process of the demand/offer relationship, and there is an increasing desire to offer more content in less time, to reduce to the minimum the time needed to make the demand and obtain an answer to the offer also in the shortest time possible. To obtain these objectives it is not infrequent to use the stimulation of the senses to try to attract and motivate product acceptance, in a race to convince the person offering time that he will find the best use for it in the demand that is being made from a specific informative product. The risk lies in confusing the good utilization of time with something different such as speed in its use. The 20 seconds of a television advertisement, the short sentences in printed advertisements, the rapid change of images, an elevated tone of voice can be examples of the race to gain time that always has the same duration.

Time is like a currency that circulates with abundance on the information market. A way of trying to obtain greater time rentability is to fraction it, make it circulate in less value currencies but with more repercussion, to try that with less time investment more product and service units may pass through the mind of a potential consumer. This is a generalized wish of the companies, particularly in the service sector, who try to make time more rentable by improving their management⁷³.

d) *Concentrated ownership, specialized contents*. The information market experiences a process of concentration. Media ownership tends to be concentrated⁷⁴, especially in international areas and markets. Ownership concentration on the information market implies the possibility of having access to a dominant position in the time demand, because it usually means that one has a greater number of resources or that one obtains more circulation area for the same contents or products.

Together with ownership concentration which at times is necessary or advisable, the information society is going through an intense specialization process in the contents divulged by the media. If on the one hand, there is a reduction in the titles, in physical or juridical persons who are the owners of the media, on the other hand, there is an increase in the variety of products that divulge specialized contents. This situation is opening up to an idea: that pluralism has to be sought in what the media communicate more than in who is its owner. On evaluating an informative product, its contents are most important⁷⁵; the favourable points of the product are seen in its contents and this contributes to the quality level of the owner company.

e) *Increase*. The time demanded by media companies increases every year. Various circumstances contribute to this growth: the higher cultural level and longer life span of people, the number of retired people which is increasingly higher, the tendency to reduce working hours⁷⁶, and the new

⁷³ Gregory, Ian. C.; Rawling, Simon B. (1997), p. 2.

⁷⁴ CE (1997), p. 68.

⁷⁵ Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. XI.

⁷⁶ Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A. V. (1990), p. 51.

technologies facilitating many household tasks, etc. However, this increase has weak points in the shaping of individual and collective freedom.

The increase in the time demand to assume or «consume» informative products can facilitate aggressive actions in the battle to conquer audiences, i.e. time. In a free economy, the information market is open to commercial relation techniques that try to obtain the highest levels of efficiency in attracting and maintaining optimum consumers. Hence, it is not infrequent to come across «massive» marketing actions demanding time, that bombard specific sectors of unprotected people because they lack the necessary critical level to ponder the consequences of their decisions. The so-called aggressive actions (perhaps forgetting that all aggressiveness implies provocation and attack) could lead one to condition time, to the point of *strait-jacketing time*, according to Elchardus⁷⁷. This submission is usually the result of a subtle, silent, constant and intelligent process that results in a change in the way of thinking, in acquiring new habits, in obtaining behaviors that are consistent with the desire of those who demand time⁷⁸. Individual and collective freedom may be harmed, because in the information market freedom is never a *no man's zone*; it is always present in the person's intelligence and willpower.

The following subchapters are dedicated to the study of the time demand from the press, radio and television, and conclude with some reflections on the relation between the time demand and the act of deciding.

3.1. The reading demand

When the companies that edit books or periodic publications situate their products on the information market, with the aim of making them known, they are requesting «reading time». If there is no time to read, the circulation of printed media has no meaning. As Ricoeur affirms, the mediation exercised by reading allows literary work to achieve its full significan-

⁷⁷ Elchardus, Mark (1991), p. 70.

⁷⁸ Vickers, Douglas (1994), p. 202.

ce⁷⁹. Printed matter that is not read is just an ink stain on paper, words with no reader, a voice with no echo.

Time is an essential factor in the action demanding to read the contents of a certain printed matter, and also in the distribution or circulation of the product demanded. The speed of the postal service and the time saved in the distribution were decisive in the development of the newspaper⁸⁰. The weekly periodicity and the day of publication, linked by the despatch of the post and the stagecoaches were no casual coincidences. The words *post, mail, mercury, time, day, morning*, among others, still figure in the arresting headlines of periodical publications⁸¹.

The time demand to read varies according to the type of publication requested. The diversity originates in the publication's content and the time lapse between one published number and the next, e.g. the daily periodicity concentrates the demand in a maximum 24-hour duration, which in fact is reduced to the product's 8-10 hours of effective permanence on the market.

The product's contents are related to the time demand. Images and text do not «consume» or «last» the same time. A printed image usually demands less time than the text giving the same information. The union of a photograph with its caption can cut down reading time. On the other hand, information that is consumed in a certain time also has its validity time on the market; news loses such a condition when it does not provide an answer to the necessity it intends satisfying.

The analysis of the time demand to read periodic publications has as a first exigency, that of knowing the conditions of the demanders who concur on the information market. Our study is limited to Spain and a necessary source was the documentation facilitated by the Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (OJD), which is the basis of the ideas that follow. Table 3.1.1. gives a general vision⁸² of newspapers and magazines.

⁷⁹ Ricoeur, Paul (1985), p. 286.

⁸⁰ Vid, among other scholars of time, Whitrow, G.J. (1989), p. 162.

⁸¹ Nieto, Alfonso (1984), pp. 36, 60, 81-82.

⁸² Data taken from the Boletín OJD nº 92, May 1998, pp. 27.1-27.10.

Table 3.1.1.
*Daily newspapers and magazines in Spain,
controlled by the OJD*

<i>Dailies</i>	<i>n°</i>	<i>Magazines</i>	<i>n°</i>
General Information	76	General Information	26
Sports Information	5	Specialized Information	161
Economic Information	3	Technical and Professional Publications	229
		Supplements	13
		Complimentary Magazines	88
Total	84	Total	517

Source: Boletín OJD, May 1998.

It is estimated that 84 of the daily newspapers⁸³ whose circulation is controlled by the OJD covered 98% of the total circulation of the daily press in the period from 1996-1997. The classification in three types of information allows one to differentiate the time demands made by the newspapers. In the general information dailies⁸⁴, the circulation figures present important quantitative differences, e.g. between the 440,628 copies of *El País* and the 1,403 copies of *Melilla Hoy*⁸⁵.

There are noteworthy differences also in information with specialized contents⁸⁶. Two daily publications, owned by the same company, demand different times from their readers, both in the demand quantity, i.e. the copies in circulation, as well as the time devoted to reading the newspaper. This is the case of *Marca*, a sports newspaper with a daily circulation

⁸³ For the concept of *daily newspaper* according to the Reglamento OJD, vid. epigraph 2.1.

⁸⁴ A daily newspaper on general information: «It is that daily publication with an informative content or a heterogeneous opinion of current events, that is directed towards an indeterminate reading public». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.1.1.

⁸⁵ Cfr. Boletines OJD n° 91, p. 19; n° 92, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Specialized information daily: «It is that daily publication with technical characteristics same as the previous classification [a daily on general information], but whose editorial content usually gives priority to specialized matters or topics (sports, economy, etc.), and it is directed at a specific reading public». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.1.2.

of 458,441⁸⁷ copies and *Expansion*, a financial daily with 48,170 copies⁸⁸. The reader ratio and the reading duration of the two different publications have to be taken into account when considering these figures, e.g. the newspaper *Expansion* states that 73.7% of its readers read the whole newspaper, or almost all of it⁸⁹.

With regard to the magazine market⁹⁰, it has to be pointed out that it is varied and complex. It is estimated that there are about 2,500 magazines in Spain that insert advertisements in their pages. To analyze the time demand from this class of printed media, all the magazines that were under the OJD control were studied; these magazines totaled 517 in May 1998 (Table 3.1.1.).

The 26 general information magazines⁹¹ compete with other demands on the time market, both from the printed media (dailies, supplements) as well as audiovisual (radio and television news programmes). The common periodicity is weekly.

The time demand made from the 161 specialized information journals⁹² intends to cover informative necessities of a specific nature. The OJD offers a segmentation in 27 types⁹³ that covers specific time demands in ac-

87 Boletín OJD nº 91, p. 36.

88 Boletín OJD nº 91, p. 31.

89 *Expansión* 1997. Source: *Directivos* '96.

90 For a complete analysis, vid. Cabello, Fernando (1999).

91 A general information magazine: «It is that publication, edited with a periodicity that is not daily, whose editorial contents include general information on current affairs; it is meant for the general public». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.2.1. The time demand made from magazines on general information can be divided into three types according to the area of circulation. The total number of 26 publications consists of 7 magazines with a national circulation, 2 regional, 15 local and 2 which have an international circulation. Cfr. Boletín OJD nº 92, May 1998, p. 27.2.

92 A magazine on specialized information: «It is that publication edited with a periodicity that is not daily; its editorial contents usually give more priority to specialized matters or topics and it is directed to a specific public». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.2.2.

93 1) Animals of company; 2) Cinema, Videos and Photographs; 3) Decoration; 4) Sports and Leisure; 5) Scientific Divulgarion; 6) Economy; 7) Erotic; 8)

cordance with the contents. With regard to the number of titles that exist in this subclass, the following stand out: motor magazines (21 titles); women's magazines⁹⁴ (19 titles); computer magazines (16 titles); scientific journals (11 titles).

The most numerous sector, with 229 magazines, corresponds to technical and professional publications⁹⁵. Medical journals which group 98 titles⁹⁶ stand out in importance. The time demand directed towards the medical profession is traditional in Spanish press. The following factors have contributed to this situation: on the one hand, the progressive specialization of medicine, the deep rooted custom—in the medical profession— of using this type of journal as a habitual means of information. On the other hand, the affluence of specific advertising in these publications, the development of the pharmaceutical industry, and people's growing interest in health questions.

Keeping up with the liberalization process in European television channels throughout the decade of the eighties, newspapers in some countries (among them, Spain) began publishing supplements⁹⁷ that were usually

Entertainment shows; 9) Life Style; 10) Family; 11) Women; 12) Gastronomic; 13) History; 14) Children; 15) Computers; 16) Embroidery and Patterns; 17) Literature; 18) Motor; 19) Musical; 20) Advertising; 21) Religious; 22) Satirical; 23) Health; 24) Telephone and Communications; 25) Television; 26) Travel; 27) Video games.

⁹⁴ In the sector of magazines classified by the OJD as *women's magazines* one finds a qualified time demand, not only because of the circulation but also because of the high reading index that each copy has. These publications, all with a weekly periodicity, that had the highest circulation from June 1996 to June 1997, were: *Pronto* (769,112 copies); *Hola* (622,292 copies); *Lecturas* (334,265 copies); *Diez Minutos* (313,790 copies). Cfr. Boletín OJD nº 80.

⁹⁵ Professional and technical publication: «It is that publication whose editorial content refers to specialized matters or topics (technical or professional) and is directed at a specially qualified reading public». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.3.

⁹⁶ The journal with the highest circulation is *Jano Medicina y Humanidades*, with 34,498 copies. It is distributed free of charge.

⁹⁷ Supplement: «It is that publication with a particular format and technical characteristics, with a proper title and a fixed periodicity; it is normally sold or given away with another/other publication(s) such as newspapers, magazines, etc.». Reglamento OJD, 5.3.4.

put into circulation on the weekends. Out of a total of 13 supplements that figure in Table 3.1.1., 10 are of daily newspapers⁹⁸ and 3, of magazines.

In the seventies and the beginning of the eighties, Spain climbed the bandwagon of the circulation of free publications⁹⁹, with a time demand initially made from the pages of professional and technical journals, directed at physicians, or persons working in the building sector, etc. The progressive consolidation of this type of publication obliges having conceptual boundaries. In the ample sense of the expression «complimentary copies», far more publications exist than the 88 shown in Table 3.1.1. Because of their repercussion in the time demand it is opportune to explain the different types of complimentary copies that exist, taking into account the nature of the circulation. a) A publication with *free of charge circulation*¹⁰⁰; b) A *mixed-circulation* publication¹⁰¹; c) A publication with *free of charge distribution*¹⁰².

The interest in verifying the results of the time demand for complimentary magazines has led to the outlining of different types of circulation and distribution. Free circulation can be *individualized circulation with conti-*

98 Among these supplements are those with the highest circulation in Spanish press e.g. *El Suplemento Semanal* (of various dailies) has an average circulation of 1,134,269 copies; *El Semanal TV* (of various dailies), 997,108; *El País Semanal* (of the newspaper El País), 920, 357 copies. Cfr. Boletines OJD, nº 73 & nº 91.

99 Cfr. Nieto, Alfonso (1984), Chapter 5 and Appendixes.

100 «It is that publication distributed without requiring any payment». Reglamento OJD, 5.1.2.

101 «Considered as a mixed circulation publication is that in which at least 20 per cent of the total circulation is paid in the conditions forseen in article 4.16 of the "reglamento de trabajo"». Reglamento OJD, 5.1.3. The mentioned article, 4.16 determines what is understood by paid circulation: «Total figure of copies sold at 50 per cent or more of the basic cover price fixed by the editor, excluding the taxes. It is the result of the total sum of subscriptions, the sales per copy, sales per block and the regular services, admissible as prescribed by the rules for paid publications».

102 «It is that publication which is distributed or put at the disposal of the public (usually indeterminate), free of charge». Reglamento OJD, 5.1.4.

nity, or individualized and rotatory circulation¹⁰³, discount circulation¹⁰⁴ or qualified circulation¹⁰⁵. The distribution of complimentary copies is the usual channel to formulate the time demand and here the various possibilities of free distribution¹⁰⁶ are important: a *pile of magazines* left in certain places, through *direct letterbox mailing* («junk mailing») or any other system that puts the publication within a person's reach, without any cost for the consumer.

Some initial considerations can be made about the press time demand in Spain, specifically in the daily newspaper sector as the magazine sector

- 103** Free of charge circulation (complimentary copies): «Total number of copies that are sent free of charge by the editor to an identified person. Free of charge circulation can be: a) Individualized with continuity: when the persons who continuously receive all the numbers of the publication can be identified. The difference has to be pointed out, in this section, between requested copies and copies that have been requested by the consumer. Also included in this section are those copies distributed by associations, entities or companies to their members, associates, clients, etc. without the persons in question having to pay for them; and, if they do so, they have no option to deduction from the quota they pay. b) Individualized and rotatory circulation: this is when the publication sent to the consumer is not done in a continued manner, although a stable and verifiable circulation plan does exist». Reglamento OJD, 4.17.
- 104** Discount circulation: «These are copies sold for less than the cover price established in the epigraph 4.16. They are only computable in the paid circulation of mixed and complimentary publications». Reglamento OJD, 4.19.
- 105** Qualified circulation: «This corresponds to known receivers whose personal information crediting them as qualified receivers can be verifiable». Reglamento OJD, 4.20.
- 106** Complimentary distribution: «The total number of copies situated in established places and put, free of charge, at the disposal of an indeterminate public. Complimentary distribution can be: a) In block form: Free distribution of piles of copies is that which presents the following characteristics: i) Redistribution: only when the intermediaries, who agree to redistribute the copies received, are known. ii) Picked-up copies: correspond to those copies placed in piles in established places to be voluntarily picked up by the public. b) Direct letterbox mailing (also called «junk mailing»): corresponds to this distribution in which the copies are deposited in the letterboxes of the consumers, or carried out in a similar way in a specific geographical area. c) Others: «any other distribution system not included in the previous sections». Reglamento OJD, 4.18.

has so much diversity it is difficult to underline valuations, even general ones. The magazines subject to control are those with the highest circulation; however, the number of titles controlled by the OJD are less than 25% of the total number of magazines circulating on the market.

Table 3.1.2. Offers data on Spanish daily newspaper circulation in 1996 and 1997 ¹⁰⁷.

Table 3.1.2.
Circulation of Spanish daily newspapers (1996/1997)

Type	Total circulation	%
General information	3,055,187	77.1
Sports information	825,682	20.8
Economic information	87,886	2.1
Total	3,968,755	100.0

Source: OJD.

A significant datum in evaluating the time demand level in the daily press is proportioned by the percentage of the sports press: 20.80% of the dailies distributed attend to the information needs on sports.

In 1997 the copies of Spanish daily newspapers circulating per 1,000 persons aged 14 years + (not over the total population) were 11,678 copies, a low figure if compared with other countries of the European Common Market. The reading demand is rather poor, and according to what is shown in the epigraph 2.1., the time offer is also poor.

It is not easy to determine the causes of this situation. The datum on the time demand made from the sports newspapers is eloquent because it represents 5.95% of the total number of titles; however, the time demand is made from 20.8% of the total number of copies circulated. On the other hand, 90.47% of the newspaper titles are on general information and assume 77.1% of the circulation.

¹⁰⁷ Cfr. Boletín de OJD, nº 92, May 1998.

3.2. The demand from the audiovisual media

«Listen» and «see» are verbs that can be associated with speed; perhaps because of this the audiovisual communication media contribute to the rapid rhythm that characterizes many activities of the information market. Messages emitted by radio, television, videos, cinema, internet, etc. usually require speed for their nearly instantaneous circulation and message grasp. Consciously or unconsciously, one tries to gain time, speeding it up or shortening it, almost with the pretension of a minute having more, or less than sixty seconds, according to the desire of the person who demands time. These situations may have perverse consequences because as pointed out by Fiorani¹⁰⁸, time acceleration multiplies spaces and relativizes places and areas that shape one's proper identity and gives meaning to life.

The time demand made from products and informative services divulged by the audiovisual media is the largest on the information market. It can be said that this is a *constant, changing and abundant* demand: it remains on the market 24 hours a day and 365 days of the year; the contents of the products that demand time change with great speed; the number of products abound and competitiveness increases on the information market.

The time demand from products and audiovisual services emitted by radio and television will be studied next.

A) Radio

Because of historical reasons of its appearance on the market and the political treatment it was given from the start, the radio obtained a statute that made the presence of state owned radio stations compatible with private radio stations in many countries. National radio stations cover their financing and exploitation with charges to the state's general budget and/or the payment of a royalty or tax by those who have a radio. Private radio stations usually have, as a sole or principle source of income, that which is obtained

¹⁰⁸ Fiorani, Eleonora (1998), p. 56.

from the emission of advertising announcements. This double configuration is projected in the grouping of radio stations in *commercial* and *non-commercial* stations. Table 3.2.1. shows a general perspective of the approximate number of radio stations in some European countries that demand time from the consumers to listen to their programmes.

Table 3.2.1.
*Commercial and non-commercial radio stations
in some European countries*

Country	Commercial	Non-commercial
Germany	196	43
Northern Belgium	120	60
Southern Belgium	80	40
Denmark	170	110
Spain	1,450	50
Greece	700	
Italy	365	
Portugal	265	3
United Kingdom	182	62
Total	3,428	368

Source: Carat, 1997.

Commercial radio stations represent 90.3% of the total number and non-commercial radio stations, 9.7% of the remaining. The liberalization process of radio station ownership has contributed to this situation. However, with regard to the time demand, the figures of Table 3.2.1. should be considered with reservations. On the one hand, the area of coverage is different with independence of the ownership of the radio station; it responds to technical reasons and sometimes to the concessions of an administrative nature. Besides, new technologies introduce variations that alter the market, e.g. the remodelling of FM radio stations, cable incorporation or digital technology.

If the number of radio stations is placed in relation with the populations of the different countries shown in Table 3.2.1., the complexity of this market is demonstrated.

What is the situation in Spain whose number of leading radio stations is the highest in the relationship commented before? Table 3.2.2. shows the ownership distribution of 1,547 commercial radio stations, a figure obtained on adding 97 stations that were not included in the previous table.

Table 3.2.2.
Commercial radio stations in Spain (1996/1997)

<i>Radio networks</i>	<i>Nº of radio stations</i>	<i>Radio networks</i>	<i>Nº of radio stations</i>
Ser /CR	132	Radiolé	15
Cope/CR	90	Others/Autonomous radios	2
Ser/ FR	66	Onda Cero/FR	37
Onda Cero/CR	121	Ser/Mixed	39
Dial	78	Cope/Mixed	14
Independent radios	130	Radiovoz	23
Autonomous radios	12	Others/Municipalities, Districts, etc.	670
Cope/FR	45	Sinfo	11
Ibérica/Top	21	Onda Cero /Melodies	8
M-80	31	Onda Cero/Mixed	2
TOTAL			1,547

Source: Vives Radio SBA.

CR = Commercial radio; FR = Formula radio.

Four groups of commercial radios that make up 44.19% of the total stand out: Ser: 237 stations, 15.31%; Onda Cero: 168 stations, 10.85%, Cope, 149 stations, 9.63%; Independent radios, 130 stations, 8.40%.

With the data proportioned in Table 3.2.2. and 546 radio stations marked out (with specifications on the type of emissions they make), the following conclusions, of interest when delimiting time, were reached: 343 stations (62.82%) were commercial radios; 148 stations (27.10%) corresponded to formula radios; mixed radios counted with 55 stations (10.07%).

The title of «Others/Municipalities, Districts, etc.» group 670 radio stations that are difficult to break down into commercial and non-commer-

cial. However, they are included in the section of commercials because in the majority of the cases the possibility of obtaining revenue through advertising remains open.

Which contents or programmes demand time with the greatest power of attraction? A usual way of increasing the power of attracting an audience (i.e. of formulating a time demand with the highest possibility of success in the response) is the configuration in national radio networks integrated by radio stations belonging to an important group that emit programmes, in which associated stations join in as «in a chain». Geographical coverage and audiences vary according to the programming contents. According to the data of the Centro de Información de Radio, CIRES (Vives Radio SBA), Table 3.2.3. proportions a scheme of the principal radio networks¹⁰⁹.

Table 3.2.3.
National radio networks

<i>Radio network</i>	<i>Programming Format</i>	<i>Radio stations</i>	<i>Provinces Provinces</i>	<i>National Coverage%</i>
Ser	Conventional radio	154	52	95.2
Onda Cero	Conventional radio	123	52	92.3
Cope	Conventional radiol	91	46	93.1
Radio España	Conventional radio	27	18	55.0
Radiovoz	Conventional radio	27	14	32.9
40 Principales	Hid-parade	66	47	86.8
Cadena Cien	Hid-parade	45	39	81.7
Onda 10	Hid-parade	37	29	57.3
Cadena Dial	Spanish music	78	45	79.1
Radiolé	Flamenco & coplas	15	13	32.4
Cadena M-80	Contemporary music	30	25	66.8
Onda Melodía	Golden exits	11	10	31.3
Cadena Sinfo	Classical music	8	8	41.1

Source: CIRES. Vives Radio SBA, 1998

¹⁰⁹ The Cadena Ser network also has 26 mixed radio stations that emit a conventional format radio programming, the 40 Principals and Formula Dial. Cadena Cope has 12 mixed stations that emit conventional and formula 100 programmes. In both cases, at different times and different days of the week.

a) Table 3.2.3. gathers 13 types or programming formats, 6 in commercial radios and 7 in formula radios. Programmes in formula radios demand time from musical contents and are linked to the three largest radio groups: Ser, Cope and Onda Cero.

b) The total of these 3 networks, in their commercial radio chain programming, accumulate a time demand with a coverage superior to 90% of the national territory. Of the commercial radios there are a total of 368 stations, the Ser covers 41.9%, Onda Cero, 33.4% and Cope, 24.7%.

c) The time demand from the commercial radio networks is intense, as can be seen on comparing the audience data and participation percentage on the market, of state and commercial radio stations. In commercial radios in 1997, of a 34.2% audience average of a total population aged 14 years +, Radio Nacional de España (RNE 1) assumed 4.6% and had a 10.2% participation on the market. The corresponding percentages of the commercial radio networks were: Ser, 11.8% and 28.5%; Cope, 8.8% and 24.4%; Onda Cero, 5.5% and 15.1%¹¹⁰.

B) *Television*

For an increasing number of persons the television is no longer just an apparatus, a piece of furniture, a household thing which gives a service at some time of the day. It is an instrument through which persons with passive moments who are ready to hand over various hours can demand time and find offers. But the time demanded by a television entrepreneur (the TV set is an instrument) goes further than chronological time. Why? Because television time frequently obtains an unconditional acceptance on the part of the person who converts it into time that is almost human; it conditions attitudes, behaviour, introduces ideas in the mind, making the person identify himself with utopic ways of life. But it does not mean that the many positive effects of the time demanded by television should be ignored.

¹¹⁰ Cfr. AIMC (1998), pp. 27 & 29.

Condry states that the television is governed by the clock¹¹¹, in the sense that the seconds command programme organization and programme schedule. Emission time has to be closely examined as the clock measures and orders activity. It can also be said that television governs the spectators' clock, and that frequently it even supplants it. For some persons, time is not indicated by their clocks or watches but by a specific television programme. However, clocks and watches have a meaning in the measure that they contribute in orientating and organizing life; when time organization is imposed by something distant to the will of the watch's owner, it is just an ornament.

Another reason to affirm that television time goes further than chronological time is the progressive change in television function or in that of the image that reaches us through the television and computer media. The services offered by the television show attractive horizons, as observed in some experiences in TV shop, TV marketing, TV work, TV health and other services that will appear in the immediate future. However, this medium can acquire such power that it can mediatize the life of its user.

Time is an *object* that is demanded by television networks and time is also a shaping element of the *product/service* that attracts the time offer of its potential consumers. This configuration function is manifested when elaborating the programme schedule that tries to include contents of a diverse nature framed in specific hours of the day, specific days of the week, and weeks within specific months. Time is an essential element in the logic of television business¹¹². On the other hand, time has an importance in the *generic* time demand (e.g. to attract an audience to a television channel) and in the *specific* demand (e.g. the person who looks for the time to watch a certain programme).

The presence of private television companies, generally in the juridical form of a limited liability company and shareholders, has toughened up competitiveness in the time demand market. State owned televisions continue having high audience quotients, although this has dropped in the last

¹¹¹ Condry, John (1994), p. 36.

¹¹² Dematté, Claudio; Perreti, Fabrizio (1997), pp. 119, 126.

years. Television market in Spain in 1997 had the following percentages of audience distribution: TVE 1, 25.5%; TVE 2, 7.3%; Antena 3 TV, 22.6%; Tele 5, 22.0%; public televisions from autonomous regions, 18.0%; Canal Plus, 3.4%¹¹³. State television with national coverage in TVE 1 and TVE 2 covers 32.8% of the audience, while the percentage in 1994 was 36.3%, and in 1990 (the year private televisions were setting in Spain), 74.0%. The competence for time demand is characterized by the fact that all the TV channels insert commercial advertising. This means that a tendency exists for the programme planning to have, as its main objective, the attraction of the largest or best audience for its advertising interests, i.e. the longest and best time of the spectators.

Audience atomization is a common factor in the television market. Perhaps an initial sign is offered by the televisions with a regional coverage that tend to satisfy interests with specific cultural significance and information for the region. In Spain this first step was observed in the televisions of the autonomous regions. Table 3.2.4. shows the percentage participation of each of the autonomous regions in Spain in the television market area of its territory.

Table 3.2.4.

*TV channels in the autonomous regions in Spain (1997).
Distribution: participation in its sphere*

<i>TV network</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
TV 3	29.5
Canal 9	22.8
Tele Madrid	19.8
Canal Sur	19.3
TVG	19.1
ETB 2	15.4
ETB 1	8.1
Canal 33	5.4

Source: AIMC (1998).

¹¹³ Cfr. AIMC (1998), p. 35.

The data in Table 3.2.4 show that the channels from the autonomous regions with a coverage of 19% or more have an estimable time demand. The television of Catalonia, TV 3 comes near to 30% of the audience total in that autonomous region, which is an important participation. As a whole, it can be said that the time demand from the autonomous regions television channels offers possibilities of growth.

The importance of the *programme* obtains prominence on raising the question of whether if through *programming* the *purchase* of the time demanded is carried out. For De Vescovi, in economic terms one can say that television *purchases* the spectator's time¹¹⁴. This affirmation leads to a paradox: television purchases the time that the spectator pays for. How can one explain such a paradox?

When a television company demands time from the spectators and obtains a positive answer, it can achieve one or various of the following counter-services: a) the spectator's time; b) to be able to offer part of this time to the advertisers and perceive a sum based on advertising rates; c) in some cases, paying the subscription to watch a television channel; d) at other times it perceives the price for making it possible to receive, via satellite, a specific programme (*pay-per-view*); e) Besides, there are other possible counter-services through TV shop, TV marketing, etc.

Time as a demand object from the television is an asset that slowly but surely grows in value for those who offer it. People start to discover that their decision in favour of one or another channel, one programme or another, has consequences in various areas: ethical, mental health, education, cultural, household economy, etc. It is an asset that is worthwhile considering before handing it over to the demand. Hence, the importance of a decision taken regarding time.

3.3. Demand and decision in time

To live is to use time, spend it on activities that give meaning to life, or leave it empty. It is not possible to be indifferent with time; *doing nothing* with

¹¹⁴ De Vescovi, Francesco (1997), p. 37.

time is to turn one's back on reality, because it is inexorable, with no going back. It is obligatory to decide what to do with time, either through a personal decision or by leaving others to decide what to do with our time. Time is a friend of freedom and admits varied forms of deciding its use, about how to spend it. Firstly, there is a type of decision that vinculates time to a long term basis and with a finality of a permanent nature like that of deciding on the continued work that shapes one's profession or occupation; professional work is the continuity of a task in time throughout life. This type of personal decision on time is usually accompanied by vinculations of a juridical nature in the way of work contracts and the providing of services.

Through other kind of vinculations, not less important, the destination of time to tasks that are essential in the life of persons is decided: food, sleep, personal hygiene, fulfilment of religious, civic obligations, etc. There are also time-related decisions that present themselves unexpectedly, occasionally, relative to tasks that brighten the life of people. Among these tasks which receive the description of leisure and entertainment, is that of attending the demands that formulate the communication media. In the information market time decisions count with a powerful attraction that is the television. This can be deduced from the data in Table 3.3.1, which shows the average daily minutes that people from some European countries dedicate to television¹¹⁵.

Table 3.3.1.

TV: Minutes per person and day in some European countries

Country	Minutes	Country	Minutes
Russia	224	France	180
United Kingdom	215	Portugal	165
Greece	212	Belgium (northern)	161
Spain	209	Denmark	155
Italy	207	Holland	151
Belgium (southern)	193	Finland	150
Germany	183	Norway	144
Ireland	182	Sweden	141

Source: EurodataTV/Relevant Partners. TV World, May 1998, p. 13.

¹¹⁵ The 209 minutes corresponding to Spain in 1997, are taken from the calculations of Sofres. In 1998 these were two minutes more, i.e. 211 minutes.

Between Russia, the country which dedicates most time to television, with a daily average of 224 minutes and the least —Sweden (141 minutes)— there is a difference of 83 minutes. The average for the 16 countries that figure in Table 3.3.1. is 3 hours daily, equivalent to 21 weeks, which means 60% of a 35 hour working week. It has to be pointed out that these hours dedicated to television proceed, to a good extent, from decisions taken by persons who are not working. because of their age or other reasons.

What does it mean to decide for press, radio and television networks, etc?

Accepting a time demand on the information market has a direct relationship with the contents that fill up the time demanded. The decision to see or listen to a programme, and read a certain publication requires having time, in a greater or lesser measure, at one's disposal; if there is no time to see or to read, there can be no decision, only desire. But time's intangibility makes the decision in some way intangible, although it is specified and materialized in printed text, sound or images. Deciding about something intangible is an adventure of the intelligence that should imagine that which one will choose. As stated by Vickers¹¹⁶, the choice is carried out more between imaginations than between objects.

What is imagined but not yet carried out implies confiding in who will satisfy the necessity with an already imagined solution. That is why, in the decision taken in the face of the communication media time demand, there is a response with a dosis of confidence that is frequently backed by optimism or hope. A confiding attitude can end in complacency in view of the fact that the demand has an immediate gratuitousness, not requesting anything in exchange (*it only requests time*) or in some cases, a possible postponed payment that one does not know will be made.

Deciding about time in the information market is a way of making a life investment because human life has, in time, one of its measures. The decision or election is generally adopted in real time, brief and quick, which makes it difficult to clear up uncertainties or reduce risks. The affirma-

¹¹⁶ Vickers, Douglas (1994), pp. 195-196.

tion that «in real time, best is an enemy of better»¹¹⁷, should not justify irresponsible decisions on the destiny of time, or the abandoning of the exercise of freedom in favour of someone who requests time.

The tendency to reduce the «decisions in process» to obtain greater time rentability and the desire to make «on the spot» deliveries with «simultaneous engineering» applications¹¹⁸, are valid as long as this does not imply the loss of time control in persons participating in the commercial or informative relationship. Freedom of choice and of time control are two mainstays of the quality of life¹¹⁹, in which the future is as important as the present. Having time to decide is a way of maturing the choice with knowledge of the expectatives, which allows to establish ideas, evaluate future possibilities, determine (with guarantee) the action at the present time¹²⁰. Pieters and Warlop studied the impact of time pressure and the motivations of the benefit offered in the visual attention of a person during the election process of a product. Time pressure can lead to the acceleration of information acquisition on the product, to filter the information acquired, or to change the strategy of the information obtained¹²¹.

On the time market the waiting period, when foreseen, is not delay but an occasion to receive the future, of maturing the choice with an adequate critical level.

Free time is linked to a free person; that is why it is difficult to classify it. There is a common element in all free time: leisure. One of the rewarding occupations of spare time can be expressed with the word, a way of entertaining the spirit, proportioning recreation to the intelligence, enjoying a game, etc. But *entertain* is also a verb with the meaning of awaiting to receive something never completely obtained. Perhaps because of this, motivating illusions is a way of entertaining.

117 McKena, Regis (1997), p. 10.

118 Toffler, Alvin & Heidi (1996), p. 58.

119 Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), pp. 54-55.

120 Van Raaij, W. Fred (1991), p. 33.

121 Pieters, Rik; Warlop, Luk (1999), pp. 3 & ss.

What is entertainment time for a person? Fortunately there is no general valid answer because if there was it would exhaust the immense possibilities of using time freely, but estimations exist that allow one to come close to the answer. For example, it is estimated that every year USA citizens dedicate at least 120,000 million hours to legal kind of amusements; this means a disbursement (or an investment, it all depends on how it is considered) of around \$150,000 million¹²². These figures can provide a framework for the data in Table 3.3.2.

Table 3.3.2.
Leisure activities of adults in the USA (1995)

Media	Hours/Year	Percentage
Television	1,575	46.2
Radio	1,091	32.0
Records, CD	289	8.5
Dailies	165	4.8
Books	99	2.9
Magazines	84	2.5
Others	104	3.1
Total	3,407	100.0

Source: Vogel, Harold (1998), p. 9.

CD = Compact disc

Adult USA citizens cover 78.2% of their free time by accepting the time demands formulated by televisions and radios in that country. The images and sounds are amusements that people compensate by handing over their time¹²³.

Shew and Steelzer¹²⁴, in a study of the information market in the United Kingdom, underlined time consumption as a way of knowing the concen-

¹²² Vogel, Harold, L. (1998), p. xvii.

¹²³ Id., p. 4.

¹²⁴ Shew, William, B.; Stelzar, Irwin, M. (1996), p. 127.

tration level of this market, although they point out that the relationship between the influence of a medium and the time the public dedicates to it is not perfect. Table 3.3.3. reproduces the data published by these authors on the time that some communication media attract.

Table 3.3.3.
*Time dedicated to some media
in the United Kingdom (1993-94)*

Media	Weekly hrs per capital	%
<i>Television</i>		
BBC	11.2	28.1
Commercial	12.9	32.3
(ITV+Channel 4)		
<i>Radio</i>		
BBC	6.3	15.7
Commercial	5.1	12.8
<i>Newspapers</i>		
National Dailies	1.5	3.7
National Sunday	1.3	3.3
Regionals	0.7	1.8
<i>Magazines</i>		
Top 20 Weeklies	0.6	1.6
Top 20 Monthlies	0.2	0.4
Cinema	0.1	0.2
TOTAL	39.9	99.9

Source: Shew, W.B.; Stelzer, I.M. (1996), p. 134.

Once more the primacy of the time percentage attracted by the audiovisual media was confirmed. The total of the two television stations included in Table 3.3.3. accumulated 60.4% of the time. The largest share of weekly time corresponds to the BBC (radio and television) with 17.5 hours which means 43.8% of the total time. The incorporation after 1994 of

new television channels and radio stations to the British information market has somewhat reduced the BBC participation quotient, although it still retains the top position.

From an international perspective, can it be stated that there are important differences in the decisions related with the time that people dedicate in acceptance to the demand from the information media? Table 3.3.4 was drawn up to contribute towards answering this query.

Table 3.3.4.
*Percentage comparison
of the time dedicated to the media*

<i>Media</i>	<i>Spain</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>UK</i>
<i>Year</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1994</i>
TV	66.95	55.63	61.79
Radio	28.98	38.53	29.23
Dailies	4.05	5.82	8.97

(Author's own elaboration).

The data given are of different years for each country; however, its global nature allows for some considerations to be made. In the three countries (Spain, USA and UK), the television superates half the time dedicated as a whole to the media. The USA had the lowest percentage (55.63%) while Spain had 11.32 points more. In the radio the situation is inverse because the USA superates Spain in 9.55 points. Significant is the traditionally high index quota of the British dailies, higher than the USA in 3.15 points, and than Spain in 4.92 points.

These global data can be a step forward in posing a question: which are the programmes people dedicate most time to? Limiting the answer to the population of Spanish spectators analyzed by Sofres, Table 3.3.5 gives a relationship of the programmes that have obtained the highest audience rates during the period 1992-1998 in Spain.

Table 3.3.5.
*TV programmes with the highest
audience rates in Spain (1992-1998)*

Year	Programme	Channel	% over the total population
1992	Que te den concurso (21/VI)	TVE 1	29.5
1993	Football: Spain-Denmark (17/XI)	TVE 1	33.3
1994	Football: World Cup 94 (21/VI)	TVE 1	32.4
1995	Farmacia de guardia (28/XII)	A-3	31.5
1996	Football: Spain-England (22/VI)	TVE 1	29.4
1997	Football: Barcelona-Real Madrid (30/I)	A-3	32.1
1998	Post-Football: European Cup (20/V)	TVE 1	34.5

Source: Elaboration of communication news from Sofres data.

Table 3.3.5 poses few interpretation doubts. Football is the programme that attracted most attention, except in 1992 and 1995. The type of entertainment that this sport offers obtains the highest number of decisions in favour of the time demand from the television. The emission of football programmes implies the highest quantitative power of time demand; this explains the commercial struggle to obtain the corresponding circulation rights. These programmes have an exceptional interest; however, this does not exclude that in a global and long-term consideration there could be other programmes that in total could have higher audience rates and higher time accumulation.

Could it be stated that the decision of handing over time to football programmes emitted by television is an isolated fact? No, it is a habitual decision as endorsed by the list of programmes with maximum audiences in 1998, included in Table 3.3.6.

Table 3.3.6.

TV programmes with the highest audience rates in Spain (1998)

Month	Programme	Date	Channel	Spectators (in thousands)
January	Football: France-Spain	28/01/98	TVE 1	7,500
February	Football: Real Madrid-Valencia	02/02/98	Antena 3	8,129
March	Football: Racing-Barcelona	02/03/98	Antena 3	7,141
April	Football: Barcelona-Majorca	29/04/98	TVE 1	11,005
May	Football: European Cup	20/05/98	TVE 1	13,229
June	Football: Spain-Nigeria	13/06/98	TVE 1	12,002
July	Football: Brazil-Holland	07/07/98	TVE 1	10,120
August	Football: Real Madrid-Chelsea	28/08/98	TVE 1	4,333
September	Football: Spain-Russia	23/09/98	TVE 1	8,129
October	Football: Israel-Spain	14/10/98	TVE 1	7,989
November	Football: Inter-Real Madrid	25/11/98	TVE 1	7,530
December	Médico de familia	15/12/98	Tele 5	8,606

Source: Elaboration of communication news from Sofres data.

With the exception of December, in the remaining months of 1998 the highest number of decisions taken in favour of a single television programme (not a series) was football.

The previous data offer some reasons for reflexion. The number of people who decide to spend a good part of their free time on informative products, especially entertainment programmes emitted by television is high. The majority of the decisions have the lure of not implicating expenditure, of not having to pay a price. However, the reality is very different because the *merchandise* that is object of change is time. Perhaps one can remember the aphorism *better to be bluffed in the price than in the goods*¹²⁵. It is better to pay than to spend time uselessly watching

¹²⁵ BALTASAR GRACIÁN, *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia*, edición de Emilio Blanco, Ediciones Cátedra, S.A. Letras Hispánicas, Madrid, 1995. Aforismo

programmes with poor contents, because what is important is in what one spends one's time, not the price one has to pay in doing so. On the other hand, the real price will increasingly be lower or symbolic because we are going forward towards a period of the information market in which informative products will, in many cases, have an *added value* of other non-informative services (financial, sanitary, food, insurance, etc.).

A decision made in the face of a time demand on the information market increasingly finds less technical difficulties because the informative companies try to facilitate matters to the maximum. Television makes it easy for everything to be seen *without actually going to see it*¹²⁶, but such facility can lead to the error of thinking that because something is easy it is good and because it is good, it is transparent¹²⁷. Through this way freedom can have the gratuity or the facility as a ready reckoner or an action measure. History has shown that what is easy and gratuitous has been and is, a propitious road for dictators.

The reality of the information market shows that the facility to have access to many and varied products makes it advisable to ponder the ethical necessity to explain beforehand how to spend time in a better way. However, this is not always possible especially when there is a desire for the decision to be taken in a short time¹²⁸. On the other hand, the information with greatest individual and social interest usually require previous knowledge, not generally accessible; the transparency of this information is conditioned by the fact of possessing this knowledge.

The time demand increases and also the occasions of deciding how to use it. Our society procures that people have more time available but, at the same time people complain that they lack time and they live in a state of

157, p. 188. It corresponds to a popular refrain: «Cheat me in the price, and not in the goods you trade».

126 Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 11.

127 «When information is available without any effort, you have transparency». McKenna, Regis (1997), p. 51.

128 Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 25.

pressure that brings about situations that are difficult to resolve¹²⁹. More time is demanded to do more than what time allows.

On the whole, the answers to the time demand improve in quality, e.g. one begins to discover that internet can be a «*terrific way to waste time*»¹³⁰, a fantastic manner of wasting time; however, this does not imply ignoring the possibilities of internet in teaching and research fields. The same thing can be said regarding some time demands made from the television. The television is a cross-road of time where one finds entertainment and education hours (that are necessary for people who have no other better way of using their time) with hours of violence, or utopias which preoccupy those who think of the responsible coexistence of people and of taking care of children's intelligence.

It is necessary, from the time demand, to put in effort and imagination in deciding or choosing, with rational responsibility, the products that should be divulged. As in any other activity, the decisions taken on the information market require time which has to be adequate to the condition of the person who has to decide. Time decisions cannot be predetermined in a general manner; flexibility is necessary to understand that one person can take ten minutes to make a decision while another person needs only two minutes¹³¹.

It is unattractive and inadequate to the reality of the information market to affirm that it is impossible to foresee or forecast the time demand and the answer that can be given. In this market as well as in others¹³², time is

129 «Time pressure is increasing due to the fact that all the final products are weighed in relation with a more ample range of other new opportunities. In some cases, temporal limitations are more important than budget limitations; this is a typical conduct of opulent persons, but it seems that at present it has extended to a much more ample section of society. An example could be the young people who increasingly have greater difficulties to manage the temporal limitations of the teaching system, home education, television, multi-media entertainment, physical training and household tasks». CE (1997), p. 49.

130 Affirmation of Clifford Stoll, an astronomer in Berkely (USA) cited by Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 30.

131 Van Raaij, W. Fred (1991), p. 28.

132 O'Driscoll, Jr.; Gerald, P. (1996), p. 3.

foreseeable while it passes and offers continuous situations, generally without sudden changes. It is feasible to bring the future to the present because frequently it is already here. The desired «*anticipation culture*» which requests the companies the capacity to anticipate the changes¹³³ has a direct application on the time demand from the communication media and its supports.

133 Vid, e.g. COM (96) 389 final, p. 11.

4. Mediation of time

The majority of the commercial relations that are established in the markets correspond to the sector of services, and among these the mediation activities on offers and demands of an informative nature stand out. In its juridical significance, mediation is a contract in virtue of which a person is obliged to pay another person, the mediator, a remuneration for indicating the opportunity of concluding a business with someone or for being an intermediary in this relation. The mediator's action is specified in the offer/demand relation and concludes once it is carried out.

Mediation has special importance in the information market where the communication *media* fulfills a mediating function on relating those who wish to communicate information with those who wish to receive it. Information companies need the collaboration of people or mediating entities to carry out the circulation activity of their information products. For instance, the advertising activity (in the majority of the cases) needs the mediation of professionals (advertising agents and agencies) to establish relations between the media and the advertisers.

Of the mediating activities in which information companies participate, the following stand out: that of mediating the time offer/demand relation, being an intermediary to obtain an encounter between the time offer made by persons, and the demand created by the information entrepreneurs. It can be affirmed that mediating time in favour of an information company is *mediating the mediation*.

Time management has an increasing importance in business organization and activities¹³⁴. When the time mediated is with an informative objective, this mediation aims at participating in an act that covers ignorance, and it can be said that it is the manifestation of a reality present in current

¹³⁴ EC (1997), pp. 23 and 49.

economy: time and ignorance are motors of the economic process¹³⁵. The time/ignorance mediation is not limited to the company that edits informative products; it reaches those who distribute and attract advertising.

Time mediation can fall on time linked by contracted obligations, e.g. of a professional nature, or time at one's free disposal that can be dedicated to leisure¹³⁶. Time mediation can be realized at the service of someone who offers time, of someone who demands time and also at the service of the proper mediator. These are the questions that are analysed in the following three epigraphs.

4.1. For the offer

What is to mediate in favour of the time offer with a destination to informative products? It is to give the reader, radio listener or television spectator the opportunity of having his time offer channeled towards the time demand that can best satisfy his informative interest or necessity. This mediating activity in the information market comprises a process that can be divided into three spheres: *identifying* the offer, *stimulating* the offer to make it manifest itself, *maintaining* the offer and making it continuous. Each of the three mediating activities in favour of the time offer will be next analysed.

A) *Mediation to identify the time offer*

Identifying the time offer implies knowing the potential time market of persons in condition of offering time to a product or informative service.

135 O'Driscoll, Jr.; Gerald, P. (1996), p. 5. Vickers states: «The conjunction of time and ignorance and the uncertainties they conjure as we stand at points of economic decision was recognized as early as the writer of the book of the Ecclesiastes. *Time and change*, it was where observed, *happeneth to them all* (Eccl. 9:11)». Vickers, Douglas (1994), pp. 9-10. The Spanish version of this passage reads: «Time and chance, in everything, are intermingled».

136 For a distinction between these two types of times, vid. Van Raaij, W. Fred (1991), p. 32.

In short, it means analysing the time available to identify the shortage or the necessity of time coverage for potential offers to a specific demand.

The task of identifying and limiting sectors of time offers is facilitated by the methods and systems of computerized analysis that enable audience identification. Audience study facilitates getting to know the *non-audience* (empty of a time offer or with time not yet offered), absent on the information market.

The lack of a time offer for some informative products may be the consequence of people ignoring that they exist and that they have the capacity of satisfying an offer. This could be the case of a person being unaware of the existence, on the market, of a magazine whose contents respond to an informative necessity of the person in question, who is ready to offer time. But this lack of a time offer could also be the consequence of a shift of offers on the information market. To this effect Sartori indicates that the present displacement of written culture is not compensated by an audiovisual culture¹³⁷ and may provoke a knowledge vacuum.

At present it is easier to mediate in favour of time offers to view rather than to read, because assimilating a written text requires intensity and effort that is generally greater than that required to look at an image. However, reading has a certain power of *lengthening* the use of time, in the same way that on fixing one's sight and paying attention to a clock, it appears that time passes by more slowly.

B) *Mediation to manifest the offer*

The latent offer does not reach the market, the *possibilities* announce a business but do not accomplish it. It is necessary for the offer to be manifested, declared, made known. Experts in market analysis try to get to

¹³⁷ «Non è fatto vero —come lascia intendere la faciloneria dei multimedialisti— che la perdita della cultura scritta è compensata dall'acquisizione di una cultura audio-visiva. Morto un re non è detto che se en trovi un altro: si può anche restare senza re. Una moneta cattiva non compensa la moneta buona: la caccia». Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 113.

know the non-manifested offer and study adequate ways of making it present on the specific market they analyse. With regard to the area of the press market, there are frequent studies on how the time offer is manifested, e.g. in daily newspapers covering general information. Table 4.1.1. summarizes the various ways of obtaining a daily newspaper, according to a questionnaire carried out on a total number of 1,507 people.

Table 4.1.1.
Usual way of obtaining a newspaper

<i>Ways of obtaining a newspaper</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Buying it	57.5
Taking out a subscription	3.4
Reading another person's newspaper	17.4
Reading a complimentary copy	4.8
Reading a newspaper at place of work	9.3
Reading a newspaper in a bar	7.6

Source: Media Planning, February, 1995.

The time offer that ended in the reading of a daily newspaper that the person in question had bought covered 60.9% of the total number of people who answered the questionnaire, while 39.1% read the daily free of charge because another person had bought it. Only 3.4% of the persons who offered up time to a newspaper did so with a continuity that was guaranteed, to some extent, because they had taken out a subscription. The datum that the free of charge way of reading a daily newspaper covered nearly 40% of the time offer made in favour of dailies is interesting, above all if it is taken into account that the majority of the time offers find a demand in informative products rated as complimentary, especially those that come from the radio and the television. The *sale per copy*, according to the OJD terminology continues being the highest percentage but the fact that this percentage is 57.5% emphasizes the importance of knowing the number of readers, the persons who read the daily newspaper regardless of who buys it.

The study of the time offer manifestation requires knowing how this is specified, in as far as the length of time. Continuing with the analysis of

Media Planning, Table 4.1.2. shows the number of pages of a daily newspaper that the persons questioned read or glanced at.

Table 4.1.2.
Number of pages read/glanced at of a newspaper

<i>Pages %</i>	<i>Pages read %</i>
100	33.9
75	37.9
50	19.9
25	6.3
<25	2.0

Source: Media Planning, S.A. (1995).

With regard to the data in Table 4.1.2. it is important to remember that the intensity in the time dedicated to reading is generally greater than that dedicated to watching or to listening. On the other hand, the time offered to reading a daily is normally limited by the proper reader who manifests specific interest in a certain section or in some pages. The time occupied to reading all the pages of a daily is practically impossible to offer by the majority of readers. It is important to underline that 71.8% of those questioned declared that they read or glanced at three quarters or more of the newspaper. But reading and glancing are not analogous terms. How does one usually read a daily newspaper? Table 4.1.3. gives some clues to help come near to the answer.

Table 4.1.3.
Usual way of reading a newspaper

<i>Way of reading</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Page to page	25.7
General glance	52.2
Reads one section/ looks at the rest	2.4
Reads one section/ glances at the rest	15.4
Other ways	4.3

Source: Media Planning, S.A. (1995)

More than half of the persons who answered the questionnaire, 52.2%, manifested their reading offer with a *general glance* at the pages, i.e. with a superficial and quick look at the newspaper's text. One quarter, 25.7%, paid attention to every page, while 15.4.% said that they read one section and glanced at the rest of the newspaper. The time offer to read is manifested in a complex way. However, this complexity has a social interest because it fulfills the mediating functions that motivate reading; it is a way of contributing to education and to elevating people's level of knowledge.

C) *Mediation to achieve continuity in the time offer*

This mediation seeks the continuity of the time offer in favour of a specific demand. Continuity does not necessarily identify itself with loyalty, because loyalty in the time offer has personal characteristics in the information market that may be altered by the behaviour of those who demand time. A reader may be loyal to a time offer and in a continued way, but at a certain moment he may break this relationship because of loyalty reasons. For example, when the contents of the product that demands time are changed, the person offering time may manifest his loyalty by stopping to do so. Time is a currency that serves to evaluate reciprocal loyalty, not only that of one part of the relationship.

The influence of external circumstances on the offer/demand relation like legislation on retirement, labour relationships, vacation periods, etc. affects the continuity of the offer. The changes in the use of time as a consequence of innovations in communication and information technology e.g. cable or digital circulation also has an influence on the continuity of the offer.

Among the mediators for the continuity of time offers, the associations or entities that group time offers such as the associations of readers or television spectators, etc. have to be highlighted.

Finally, although this will be a topic of later study, it is important to underline the mediating function that can be accomplished by the advertisers who proportion, with their time offer, remunerated economic means that contribute towards the continuity of a daily newspaper, a magazine, a radio or television programme.

4.2. For the demand

Mediating for the time demand implies proportioning adequate time offers. The information entrepreneur requests time so that the public can consume it on the products circulating on the market. This consumption will be useful to attract the time that the information entrepreneur will offer the advertisers. The mediating activity is orientated at indicating the information entrepreneur where is the time offer, which could be of interest to attract according to the contents of the product being made known by the press, radio, television, etc. This activity can be analysed from three perspectives: *to identify* and attract time for the demand, to obtain the *acceptance* of the time demanded, and to secure the *continuity* in the acceptance of the time demanded.

A) *Identifying and attracting time for the demand*

In the information market of our time, identifying time or an audience is a necessary task that can be considered from two points of view. On the one hand, identifying and attracting time with the aim that the final consumers spend it on the product; it is the optimum potential audience which, once identified, is convinced to accept the demand. On the other hand and closely linked to the previous objective, it is necessary to identify and attract the time of advertisers or persons and institutions that provide messages of a commercial or other nature, paying the advertising rates in reason of time and/or space.

Audience and advertisers are part of the mediation in favour of the media or entrepreneur that demands time. As the audience has been object of study in previous epigraphs, attention will now be paid to the advertisers.

Advertising investments show the amount of time spent in favour of the demand of time. The expression *advertising investments* refers to the sum of financial resources destined towards making a product or service known through communication supports and media. The *immediate* objective of these investments is to draw the attention of the consumers, obtain their time so as to be able to inform them of the conditions and char-

acteristics of the offer. The *mediate* objective is the acquisition of the advertised product.

Communication media and supports are vehicles to advertise time, and are usually classified as *conventional* media and *non-conventional* media because of historical reasons. Among the first are those that traditionally request time for their products from printed or audiovisual supports: press, radio, cinema, television and also exterior advertising. Out of a total investment of ptas. 1,321,886m in Spain in 1997, the conventional media covered 48.93% and the non-conventional advertising media, 52.7%. Out of a total of ptas. 1,454,202m in 1998, the distribution was 49.60% and 50.40%, respectively, with an increase of 10.01% over the previous year¹³⁸. Table 4.2.1 gives a breakdown of the advertising investment of the so-called *conventional media* in 1997 and 1998.

Table 4.2.1.
Advertising investment in Spain (1997 & 1998).
Conventional media

	<i>Ptas.</i> <i>(millions)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Ptas.</i> <i>(millions)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Increase</i> <i>98/97</i>
	1997	1997	1998	1998	%
Conventional media.	646,813	100.00	721,346	100.00	11.52
Television	247,513	39.71	288,004	39.92	16.35
Dailies	202,401	31.29	220,819	30.61	9.10
Magazines	82,962	12.82	87,603	12.14	5.59
Radio	62,657	9.68	68,420	9.48	9.20
Foreign publications	29,677	4.58	32,950	4.56	11.03
Supplements	16,259	2.51	17,200	2.38	5.79
Cinema	5,334	0.82	6,350	0.88	18.82

Source: InfoAdex.

¹³⁸ As reference data it can be pointed out that the growth of the gross national product was 3.80%; the consumer price index of 1998 was 1.8%; private consumption increased in 3.66% and public consumption, in 0.80%.

The following are some considerations on the data given in Table 4.2.1.:

a) There was an increase of 11.52% in 1998, in relation with the total investment of 1997. Proportionally, the increases in television, exterior advertising and cinema stand out. The press sector (dailies, magazines, supplements) accumulate the highest investment (ptas. 325,622m), which confirms that reading continues to be the way of spending time with the best advertising significance, without the danger of accusing a certain audience stabilization.

b) When time/audience relations are compared, situations appear that are not easy to explain rationally. For example, the average time dedicated to the radio was 100 minutes in 1997 and 96 minutes in 1998. In television, 1997 had an average of 231 minutes daily that dropped to 222 minutes in 1998. However, advertising investments in these two media increased in 1998 in relation to 1997. These differences are significative of the paradox: in the face of an increase of advertising investment in television that represents 16.35%, there was a fall of 3.89% in the audience's time dedication.

c) Exterior advertising offers special interest from the point of view of the time employed. In 1998 the investment increased in 11.03% although its market quota hardly changed. Quantifying the time assumed by exterior advertising is one of the questions that offer special difficulty, and experience shows that it has an effect in the time demand in favour of the advertisers.

d) The cinema experienced an increase of 18.82% which confirmed the growing advertising attention towards this media. Viewing time in the cinema has different characteristics from that of the television, with less alternatives that could distract one's sight. The site has as much an influence as the contents and the form of the messages.

The media or supports denominated *non-conventional* increased in importance both because of the investment accumulated as well as the innovations in the ways of attracting time in favour of products and services. These are activities that evolve with speed and agility, fruit of the initiatives that seek the best way of drawing the public's interest. When the initiatives are consolidated on the market they receive the denomination that

describe the mediator task or the place where the mediation to demand time was carried out, e.g. *advertising at the sale site*, *advertising gifts*, etc. With reference to 1997 and 1998, Table 4.2.2. shows the investments carried out in eleven activity sectors that are interesting to be observed because of their importance in the mediating task of time.

Table 4.2.2.
Advertising investment in Spain (1997 & 1998).
Non-conventional media.

<i>Non-conventional media</i>	<i>Ptas.</i> <i>(millions)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Ptas.</i> <i>(millions)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Increase</i> <i>98/97</i>
	<i>1997</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>%</i>
Total investment	675,073	100.00	732,856	100.00	8.56
Direct marketing	312,916	47.62	341,704	46.62	9.20
Advertising at sale site	114,181	17.37	117,606	16.04	3.00
Sports sponsorship	60,276	9.17	65,701	8.96	9.00
Advertising gifts	50,425	7.67	51,998	7.09	3.12
Sponsorship & Patronage	44,719	6.80	44,952	6.13	0.52
Medical & Pharmaceutical advertising	30,816	4.68	31,200	4.25	1.25
Trade shows & exhibitions	17,424	2.65	18,050	2.46	3.59
Telephone marketing	17,293	2.63	31,646	4.31	83.00
Signs & billboards	16,430	2.50	16,800	2.29	2.25
Yearbooks & Guidebooks	8,515	1.29	8,699	1.18	2.16
Direct marketing in Internet	2,078	0.31	4,500	0.61	116.55

Source: InfoAdex and author's own elaboration.

Attracting attention means attracting time and vice versa. The immediate object of *non-conventional media*, in a more specialized way than *conventional media*, is to first convince, then sell. To mediate in favour of the time demand in order to attract attention is a task that implies innovation and discovering adequate and original forms of drawing the interest of the persons to the message announced by a specific product or service. In an ample sense, the non-conventional media shown in Table 4.2.2. could

have the common heading of «promotion of offer/demand relations», or relation for the sale or «marketing». The importance of the income from the sales is perhaps the element that limits or classifies the activity, without the name responding (in some cases) to a systematized idea that confers autonomy and scientifically limits the area of specific mediation.

Direct marketing is a mediating activity characterized for directly reaching the consumer of the message that requests time in favour of an advertised product or service. It is the activity with the greatest investor force that superates the sum of those corresponding to the radio and television.

What reasons endorse the growth of marketing in the majority of countries with a free market economy? From the perspective of time mediation the following can be the reasons: a) good possibilities of individualizing the final target which is the public; b) flexibility in the time of reading the message or listening to it, subject exclusively to the will of the receiver without the conditioning of the emission hours; c) a better control of the response to the message; d) adaptation to the moments and the economical circumstances of those who demand and/or mediate time; e) autonomy in the choice of the adequate moment of the circulation of messages; f) freedom to modify contents and introduce rectifications in the circulation process.

Direct marketing admits numerous specialities such as those adequate to the specific type of supports used to demand time (the telephone, the post, internet, etc.). Direct marketing can also cover specific professional areas (health, construction, food, etc.) with a specific treatment of time that facilitates the offer/demand relation.

Advertising at the sale site is another *non-conventional* media whose investment increases, until it superates e.g. the figures that total the «magazine» and «supplement» media. The development of this type of advertising is contributed by the proximity of the site where it is carried out or where the goods demanding a time offer can be acquired. The mediator or the advertiser can modify messages with speed and flexibility, orientating them towards the products that interest him most at certain times. It is not unfrequent for the advertiser to set the guidelines in his demand of time, with the aim that the public should directly inform itself regarding the conditions of the products or services at the proper sale site.

When time is *rewarded* with gifts that serve as a bait to attract adhesion towards a specific product, it appears that handing over time is easier, without the ethical and legal conditioning that limit the value of the gift as a way of promoting a sale.

Can it be stated that *non-conventional* media are alternatives to *conventional media*? In the majority of the cases more than alternatives they are different ways of informing, that use generic ways of communicating (reading, listening, viewing) and some supports that generally coincide (printed, broadcasted, viewed, etc.).

The year arranges its days into seasons, months, weeks, a division as conventional as generalized that has a repercussion on the mediating activity to demand time. The contents of the informative products take the months of the year into account and as a consequence, vary the number or the condition of the advertisement messages and the corresponding mediating activity. Table 4.2.3. shows the distribution, per minutes, of advertising emitted on television in Spain in 1997.

Table 4.2.3.
Advertising time emitted on television. Spain (1997)

Month	Minutes	%
Total	476,052	100.0
January	25,414	5.3
February	28,573	6.0
March	35,256	7.4
April	38,205	8.0
May	45,718	9.6
June	52,073	10.9
July	41,353	8.7
August	26,044	5.5
September	37,809	7.9
October	48,110	10.1
November	49,412	10.4
December	48,085	10.1

Source: Sofres. Minutes/month.

The total time mediated to cover the advertising demand made from the television in 1997 was 476,052 minutes, i.e. 7,934.2 hours which meant a daily average of 21.7 hours. June was the month with most time dedicated to advertising, with a daily average of 28.9 hours. Four months (June, October, November and December) totalled 41.5% of the advertising time mediated for television. This accumulation was analogous to the advertising investment, as these four months were those with the highest investment and represented, as a whole, 40.8% of the total. The times and smaller investments corresponded to the months of August, January and February.

B) *Mediation to accept time from the demand*

To mediate in favour of a prompt decision implies reducing doubt. Whoever doubts delays in deciding, and this delay can favour the presence of another demand that attracts the decision to its favour.

The mediation for the person who offers to accept a specific time demand implies avoiding (not on a few occasions) doubt, reducing the time spent in taking the decision. That is why time management from the demand tends to facilitate speed even with the same product, making the product include some element that invokes speed in the decision, in its use or enjoyment. For instance, a product that can be thrown away after being used once has implicit in it, the attraction of a short period of time.

The abundance of time demands crowded together in speed, accelerates doubt to the point of making it disappear in a whirlwind of possible choices. The vertigo of decision-making causes confusion in *the doubts*, to the extent of concealing *the doubt*. The act of quickly turning the pages of a magazine, or zapping from one television channel to another does not give one the opportunity (time) to choose. Therefore, there is no room left for doubt. Frequently, it is weariness or boredom that decides for one.

As a reaction to the race to gain time and avoid doubt, at present there is a tendency to mediate time calmly, with possibilities for reflexion that can resolve the doubt in a reasonable way. The mediation tries to open spaces of time so as to get to know the contents of the demand.

An advertising form that tends to the opening of time to know the contents of the demand is the *barter advertisement* that can be understood as an exchange for time. The advertiser hands over an audiovisual product in conditions of being emitted, in exchange for the advertising time that accompanies this product (a series, a report, a comedy, etc.). The television entrepreneur receives the coverage of non-advertising time and hands over time to make the advertiser's message known. The advertiser hands over the product that covers a time of emission, and in exchange receives advertising time. In this sense the *barter advertisement* participates in the configuration of the total time of the emission. In some way it has an analogy with the tendency that Kostecki¹³⁹ describes as passing from the sale of solutions to the sale of results. Not only is it mediating time for the demand; it means going further and providing the solution that is adequate, in the opinion of the advertiser, contributing to the configuration of the product to attract the public which is also the target of advertising time.

The task of mediating time in favour of the demand made by information companies runs one of the usual risks in the information market. This risk is that the demand of the entrepreneur could be attended by the advertiser and not in the same measure, by the audience. It is a phenomenon that shows a lack of balance in the time offer/demand relation. An example of this situation is the data shown in Table 4.2.4.¹⁴⁰

Table 4.2.4.
Time and advertising in television. Spain (1991-1997)

Minutes	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Watched	187	193	204	210	211	214	209
Emitted per day	452	646	712	887	911	939	1,131
Seen a day	11	15	18	22	20	21	23
Spots emitted/day	1,132	1,439	1,856	2,260	2,607	2,756	3,291
Spots seen/day	28	38	47	56	59	62	67

Source: Sofres and InfoAdex.

¹³⁹ Kostecki, Michel (1994), p. 24.

¹⁴⁰ Cfr. *Anuncios*, n° 789, 18/24 May, 1998, p. 29.

a) From 1991 to 1996 the average time the audience spent on watching television increased, from 187 minutes in 1991 to 214 minutes in 1996. In 1997, this time was 209 minutes¹⁴¹, going down in 5 minutes. It appears that a stablization point was reached between the total time demand for television and its response from the offer.

b) The advertising time daily emitted followed a different route from that of the time spent watching television. The latter decreased in 2.3% from 1996 to 1997, while the advertising minutes daily emitted increased in 20.4%, from 939 to 1,131 minutes. The time demand made from the television company achieved a positive response from the advertisers, but not from the audience.

c) The weakness of the response from the time offer was also reflected in the average daily minutes viewed. In 1997 these were 23 minutes which meant an increase of 2 minutes in relation to 1996, and was not proportional to the effort made by the advertisers. The advertising time market functions with remarkable ease, as shown by the fact that out of the 1,131 minutes daily emitted, the average time handed over by the spectator was 23 minutes. The conditioning and legal capacity that is debated in the present television market provokes these situations which must be corrected in the future.

d) To achieve greater effectivity, advertising time in television is fractioned in various modules which provide the framework for the contents of the message and allows it to be communicated in the way the advertiser or the mediator considers most appropriate. Hence the interest in analysing the spots emitted and those actually viewed by the audience. The data in the last two lines of Table 4.2.4. facilitates some reflexions because it offers a contrast between the advertisement spots emitted per day and those that were viewed, although the increase in the two concepts was progressive in the last seven years. In 1997, 139.2% more spots were seen than in 1991, going from 28 spots a day to 67. The number of those spots emitted had a greater increase, 190.7%.

¹⁴¹ In 1998 there was an increase to 211 minutes, the same amount of time as in 1995.

e) In 1992 with relation to 1991, the spots seen daily increased in 35.7%, more than the 27.1% growth that corresponded to the spots emitted. But from 1993 onwards these increases were more in those spots emitted than in those viewed¹⁴². It is significative that 535 more spots were emitted in 1997 than in 1996, but the increase in the number of spots seen by the audience was only 5 spots, i.e. the time demand was 107 times more than the corresponding offer.

f) The previous comments need to be specified. The time with advertising contents emitted by television has a complex structure, because it not only covers time for conventional advertising but also for other types. For example, and according to the data of Sofres, the distribution of advertisement time in television in 1997 was as follows: conventional advertising, 65.3%, self advertising of the television channels, 21.2%; teleshopping, 10.1%; sponsorship, 3.4%.

C) *Mediation for time continuity in favour of the demand*

Achieving continuity in the acceptance of the time demanded by the information entrepreneur is not a task that is exclusive of a company sector or of certain persons who work or collaborate with it. It comprises all those who participate in the elaboration of the product, its circulation, commercialization, etc. This does not exclude the existence of a department whose principal function would be to obtain loyalty in the handing over of time. On the other hand, taking into account the complexity of the market, it is frequent to count with the mediation of entities, among which stand out the advertising agencies.

Talking about continuity in time for the demand means reiteration in the decisions in favour of a product. Continued time materializes in the brand of the product. The memory that allows repeating a decision in favour of a brand is an updated memory. To achieve this memory efforts are orientated towards maintaining the reiteration in time and obtaining the corre-

¹⁴² In 1993 the increase over the previous year was as follows: spots emitted, 28.79%; spots viewed, 23.68%. 1994: 21.76%; 19.14%. 1995: 15.35%; 5.35%. 1996: 5.71%; 5.08%. 1997: 19.41%; 8.06%.

spondence of the offer. The mind memorizes the advertisement in favour of a brand and on remembering it positively, creates a time offer which later leads to the decision of buying a product that is precisely the brand advertised.

The word *campaign* is expressive when applied to the sum of advertising efforts continuously directed at fixing specific time demands in the memory. An *advertising campaign* is a continuous management of time that tries to establish permanent time interchange between the four protagonists of the informative relation: the audience, the mediator, the information entrepreneur and the advertiser. This continuity, also described as loyalty or faithfulness to a certain brand, implies a game of relationships between persons and as a consequence, between products and services that concur on the markets. In the proper sense it should not be said that a brand continues or remains in time, because continuity, being time, is the exclusive heritage of the persons that produce, mediate or consume goods and services whose *distinct sign* is a *brand*.

Continuity in the esteem that persons have for a certain brand is the cause and effect of its value¹⁴³. In other words, the value of a brand is a consequence of the appreciation that persons continuously render it and at the same time, this appreciation is the cause of new continuities that grant greater value to the brand. The links of time that are favourable to a brand makes antiquity on the market to be an added value of prestige.

Time which continuously favours or harms the value of a brand, a commercial name or the sign of an establishment, can obtain one effect or another because of reasons that qualify time as being *rational* or *passional*. In the first case the mediation is related to the advice or warning that weighs up the attraction of time. *Passional* time tries to stimulate the more or less vehement desire to attract time for the demand. Mediation usually takes place, in this case, for time that leads to speedy decisions. It is not easy to achieve a balance in the use of the two times, because as Sartori¹⁴⁴ affirms, the audiovisual media can break this balance and *rational* time may be drowned in the abundance of *passional* time.

¹⁴³ Reichheld, Frederick F.; Tomas Teal (1996), p. 19.

¹⁴⁴ Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 83.

The mediation for time continuity in favour of the demand varies according to the nature of the communication media and the type of product or service that can be advertised. From this double perspective one can analyse, on the one hand, the consumer sectors that attract most time for the demand and on the other, the advertisers with the highest investment in advertising. With regard to these aspects, Table 4.2.5 offers data according to sectors, on the times that accept the demand formulated by the television in Spain.

Table 4.2.5.
Advertising in television. Spain (1997).
Advertising minutes in 10 sectors

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Total n° of spots</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total n° of minutes</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Seconds per spot</i>
1. Food	235,170	24.1	75,782	22.0	19.3
2. Beauty, Hygiene, Health	153,104	16.0	53,921	15.6	21.1
3. Education & Teaching	107,719	11.0	32,824	9.5	18.2
4. Resources, Services, Transport	90,096	9.2	36,063	10.4	24.0
5. Drinks	71,304	7.3	26,615	7.7	22.4
6. Commerce	68,414	7.0	31,155	9.0	27.3
7. Services (Public & Private)	65,309	6.7	21,471	6.2	19.7
8. Cleaning	63,110	6.4	26,863	7.8	25.5
9. Personal Objects	61,662	6.3	20,365	5.9	19.8
10. Finance & Insurance	59,410	6.0	20,429	5.9	20.6
Totals	975,298	100.0	345,488	100.0	

Source: InfoAdex and author's own elaboration.

The first column of Table 4.2.5. shows the ten sectors with the highest advertising investment in television in Spain. The second and third columns show the total number of spots emitted in each sector, and the corresponding percentage over the total. The fourth and fifth columns give the minutes and percentages that correspond to the ten sectors, while the last column calculates the average time per spot, expressed in seconds.

a) As usual, in the majority of the countries the «food» sector occupies the first place, both in the number of spots as well as in the total time employed. However, it is not first in relation to the average time per spot as 19.3 seconds is a low figure that only has below it, the spot corresponding to «education and teaching». Time demands for food products are abundant, in advertisements that last a short period of time.

b) The three first sectors cover half the number of spots, 50.8% and 47% of the total time emitted by the 10 sectors in Table 4.2.6. From this perspective it can be said that there is a concentration of sectors, not of brands or products because in these areas of consumption, products and brands abound.

c) The average number of seconds per spot emitted offer interesting aspects for the mediation in favour of the time demand. The sector of «commerce» dedicates on an average, 27.3 seconds per spot, i.e. 8 seconds more than the «food» sector. It is the demand that requests most time to attract the audience, partly because the contents of the messages are usually more complex. The difference with the «drinks» sector, 5 seconds, is significant; although it has a greater number of spots, this sector covers less time.

d) The average total of time per spot is 21.2 seconds. Four sectors («Resources, Services, Transport»; «Drinks»; «Commerce»; «Cleaning») have an average higher than this, while the remaining six sectors have an inferior average time.

As in any mediating activity that seeks time in favour of the demand, there is a natural eagerness to operate with the best clients. In the advertising sphere the agencies make a special effort to obtain the best *bank accounts* or companies with the highest investment figures, i.e. those that have the highest time offers to make contracts with the circulation media. While Table 4.2.5 shows the distribution per sectors, Table 4.2.6. offers a relation of the 10 most important advertisers in Spain in 1997 and 1998.

Table 4.2.6.
*Advertising in Spain. The ten most important advertisers
(1997 & 1998)*

<i>Advertiser 1997</i>	<i>Ptas. (millions) 1997</i>
El Corte Inglés, S.A.	12,393.0
Procter & Gamble España, S.A.	8,420.0
Club Internacional del Libro	7,334.1
Telefónica de España, S.A.	6,947.6
Telefónica Serv. Móviles, S.A.	6,542.7
Nestlé España, S.A.	6,460.2
Fasa Renault, S.A.	6,404.4
Volkswagen-Audi España, S.A.	5,836.7
Opel España, S.A.	5,771.9
Fiat Auto España, S.A.	5,464.1
<i>Advertiser 1998</i>	<i>Ptas. (millions) 1998</i>
Telefónica Serv. Móviles, S.A.	13,083.3
El Corte Inglés, S.A.	12,690.4
Procter & Gamble, S.A.	9,802.3
Telefónica de España, S.A.	8,563.1
Fasa Renault, S.A.	8,425.0
Henkel Ibérica, S.A.	7,440.6
Volkswagen-Audi España, S.A.	6,987.2
Nestlé España, S.A.	6,203.3
Airtel Móvil, S.A.	6,040.3
Ford España, S.A.	5,971.6

Source: InfoAdex.

a) In 1998, for the first time in the last six years, «El Corte Inglés» did not head the list of top advertisers. This place was occupied by «Telefónica Servicios Móviles, S.A.». The two companies of Telefónica totalled

an investment of ptas.21,646.4m, which over the total of the 10 most important advertisers (ptas.85,207.1m) represented 25.4%.

b) The telephone sector covered 32.5% of the total of the 10 most important investors. Although this could be a situation that coincided with the moment of massive introduction of the mobile telephone in Spain, it is significative that the greatest investment to demand advertising time from people was that which offered a product whose reason of being was precisely, that of negotiating with people's communication time.

c) Car and food companies occupied important places in the two years covered in Table 4.2.6.

4.3. For the own mediator

Mediation, as a commercial activity, has experienced a growth that is both quantitative and qualitative, a consequence of the development of the service market. In the sphere of the mediating activity which refers to the time offer/demand relation in the information market, the increase in the number of companies and the almost constant appearance of new informative products have led to the diversification of advertisers that seek to reach increasingly more varied audiences, with complex limits.

These reasons allow us to understand the necessity that mediating entities have of counting with the mediation of other companies that operate in the same markets. It can be said that the mediation of time in favour of other mediators of the information market is a way of saving, or making good use of, time. Two circumstances contribute to this; on the one hand, the *specialization* of knowledge of the different markets and on the other hand (and related with the previous circumstance), the *decentralization* of functions and tasks as a necessity of having access to specialized knowledge.

Specialized mediation is directed at specific situations of the time offer/demand relation, e.g. the specialization of the advertising agencies has motivated the constitution of mediating entities that operate in specif-

ic spheres such as creativity, medical and pharmaceutical advertising, sports sponsorship, etc.

The splitting of tasks previously assumed by one sole company or mediating entity enables the covering of new aspects, which are consequences of the new realities of the information market. Some advertising agencies extend their tasks to convert themselves, in its most ample significance, in companies of informative mediation services: financial consultation, company image studies, analysis of specific markets, audience studies, etc.

Another way of the mediating activity growth is the decentralization of functions whose performance is not rentable for the mediating company. Among the new ways of mediation that save time and economical resources, those that have the object of verifying the circulation of informative products, of analyzing the audiences that receive these products, and of evaluating the advertising market stand out. In Spain one can mention, among others, the Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (OJD); the AIMC; with its Estudio General de Medios; Sofres; InfoAdex. It is significant that these organizations respond to joint interests of the three sectors related with the information market such as advertisers, agencies and the media.

There is an aspect that has a special importance in the activity of *mediating for the mediator*: the possibility of inadequately utilizing other people's time, which is the objective of mediation. Getting to know how people (the target audience) use their time facilitates a certain control that could have perverse effects like «an excessive synchronization of time organization that can surpass individual control and the freedom in the employment of time»¹⁴⁵.

It is necessary that freedom in the use of leisure should not be limited or mitigated by the excessive control that may be exercised by others who know the situation and the conditions in which it is employed. The speed in getting to know the audiences of television programmes, or the cover-

145 Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 33.

age of a press or radio market can favour actions that may condition the freedom of the person who is the target of the messages, as well as the advertiser. Time management in information marketing activities can lead to *synchromarketing*, the maximum exponent of the temporal encounter between offer and demand¹⁴⁶, whose effects are not necessarily positive for freedom of choice.

Mediating in favour of the mediator acquires, in the current information market, a significance that is not always taken into account. It contributes to *reconciling* interests that are contrary to one another. In this sense, the entities that professionally study information market situations are faced with the difficult challenge of advancing along the way of qualitative analysis with indispensable intellectual rigour. It is not unfrequent for the interests of the advertiser and the medium to be different or opposite, and in such a case it is necessary to reconcile both interests through a coherent and rational mediating action. For instance, the tariff/audience relation is motive of conflictive situations. The adequacy of the price that the advertiser pays and the audience that receives the advertised message, is a consequence of rigorous studies with statistical analysis that is not always capable of completely evaluating audiences. The methodology used has especial importance in these analyses.

If a method is a procedure to find out a specific reality, the method followed to study an audience needs to be strict, when fixing the variables that can shape audience sectors or the groups of persons that make up an audience.

In the information market the concept of *class* has relative value and on occasions, very little. For example, the television audience is practically made up of the whole population and in this sense, no division of *classes* can be made. There is only one class that covers 90% of the population aged 14+. This does not exclude spectators of the same programme from having different incomes, levels of responsibility in the jobs they have, or different household equipment. An audience is characterized by a level of uniformity in the acquisition of the majority of rapid consumer goods,

¹⁴⁶ Cherubini, Sergio (1997), p. 63.

and also in the time offer for specific entertainment programmes, e.g. football.

To advance in audience analysis, perhaps it would be opportune to present time as an element of differentiation. This would imply typifying the time offer/demand relation with evaluations on the use of time, both active and passive, to reading, listening or viewing products and informative services.

5. The time market

The previous chapters serve as a gateway for the market analysis whose principal object is *time*. The study of the time market is still not sufficiently limited in the sphere of the offer/demand relation of products and services, although in the information market its importance deserves progressive recognition.

The present chapter summarizes the analysis of time as something that shapes the market. It starts with the principal *manifestations* and *characteristic* notes and concludes with the proposal of a *concept* (5.1.). The time in the life of a person is known as *age* and the different ages are the targets of specific informative products. These two realities, age and information, have special importance in the time market (5.2). Continuous work in time is a part of life and is usually the configuration of a *profession*. Professions have their own time market in the centre of the offer/demand relation of informative products (5.3). The chapter closes with some considerations on an aspect of the time market that has special social interest: its incidence in *cultural and information* relations (5.4.).

5.1. Manifestations. Characteristics. Concept

Limiting the most important manifestations of time on the market helps to outline the notes that characterize it and opens the way to the formulation or proposal of a concept.

A) *Manifestations*

Which are the principal manifestations of time's action in the various markets of products and services? These can be specified in three: a) universality; b) object of offer/demand relations; c) the configuration of a market.

a) *Universality*. In the history of commerce time has been a factor with an universal application to all markets. Both in directed as well as free economies time has served to measure contracts of loans, delayed payments, the giving of services, etc. Le Goff¹⁴⁷ points out that «in the malleability of time, that does not exclude the condition of inexorable in its passing, there are profits and losses, margins of benefits or deficits; it is the sphere where intelligence, skill, experience and the trader's guile act». This presence of time and with time continues being in force, if possible with greater universality, both geographical as well as that related to products and services of a varied nature.

The history of commerce is marked with economical decisions¹⁴⁸, adopted at specific times, more or less foreseeable but always possible to date back to later. The geographical universalization of the time market admits hour differences, holidays, seasons of the year, with the corresponding variety of time use for also varied consumption. The different hours mark differences in the opening and closing times of stock markets, working hours, the contents of television programmes, etc. The application of computerized programmes which allow for decisions to be taken twenty-four hours a day makes the universality of time on the market more obvious.

On the other hand, time is universalized as a way of fixing the expiry dates of products and services on the market, whether these are tangible goods (e.g. food products) or services of a basically intangible nature (e.g. that of a financial consultant). But the greatest and most important universalization of time on the market affects people, in their condition as producers, mediators or consumers of goods and services. If as stated by Polo, «pure expenditure is the expenditure of time»¹⁴⁹, people are protagonists of this obliged, irreversible and unchangeable expenditure. This is why time is a significative element in the price of goods¹⁵⁰. There are markets where time is the radical, primary and sometimes sole price, e.g.

147 Le Goff, Jacques (1997), p. 16.

148 Vickers, Douglas (1994), p. 195.

149 Polo, Leonardo (1993), p. 56.

150 Gregory, Ian, C.; Rawling, Simon, B. (1997), p. 8.

in the information market the time price is practically the only way the effective relation between the television advertiser and the spectator can be determined. As a consequence, the time spent watching television serves to fix the advertising tariff.

Universalization does not mean equality of time destination or occupation. There is spending of time that is accompanied by an alert intelligence¹⁵¹, and time spent in an unconscious way that leaves in the hands of another person the use of one's own time. Attention or intelligence in the use of time may be absolute or shared. A television programme may draw all the attention of the spectator or share this time with another activity carried out at the same time by the spectator, like conversing or reading, etc. Hence the concept of an audience not linked to time increasingly has less importance at the time of fixing the price of an informative product.

The universality of time on the market that in some way affects the life of a person cannot be exclusively considered as isolated time, but as a sum of times and in a global way¹⁵². The distribution of time experiments changes to a good measure as a consequence of innovations of information and communication technology that modify habits, ways of life and which may alter the channels through which new information is reached. This process of remodelling in the distribution of time (labour, professional, leisure, etc.) will have greater incidence in the next few years as it is foreseeable that the beginning of the third millennium will demand more time from people to acquire, preserve and increase their knowledge¹⁵³.

b) *Object of relations*. It is increasingly more frequent for time to be the *object* of the offer/demand relation on the markets. Not only is the goods or service offered and demanded at a specific time but the relation is also qualified and determined by it. Among the services that stand out, to the effects of the present study, are the products and information services that

151 Already in the first century Plinio the Old had written: «profecto enim vita vigilia est»: «to live is to be awake». Cfr. *Naturalis Historiae*, praef. 18.

152 Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), preface V.

153 Brooking, Annie (1997), p. 58.

circulate through traditional media and supports (press, radio, television, etc.) or the new media. It is the information market that is shaped as a time market. If we get rid of time as an object of offer for the reader and of demand for the editor, what sense would a daily newspaper or a magazine have, whether paid for or free of charge?

Stating that time is an *object* of relations —commercial, informative, cultural, etc.— is in some way making time a *commodity*, manifesting that one can make *agreements* with time, that one can *hire* the time of a person. Certainly time as a measurement of work serves to determine relations of a labour or professional nature that admits greater or lesser duration and greater or lesser intensity. But the extension of time has a common measurement for all persons, e.g. from the 14th century and through a generalized agreement, a day has 24 hours, an hour 60 minutes and a minute, 60 seconds. A person's freedom adds value to time according to his dedication and intensity.

A person is the first titular of the use of his time and has the right to be respected both by the State as well as by physical and juridical persons. But the freedom to administer time is not absolute and as with other kinds of freedom, it is conditioned by general interests. Public administration, in virtue of solidarity and subsidiary principles is obliged to respect the exercise of free administration and the right of election in the use of time, directly or indirectly promoting free circulation of time offers and demands, destined to occupations of general interest on educative, religious, cultural, public health matters, etc. This guardianship and promotion from official entities will avoid situations of monopoly on leisure time, that can convert the so-called *free* time in *captive* time.

c) *The configuration of a market.* The two previous manifestations of time in its relation with the market (universality and object of relations) acquired special importance from the decade of the eighties when there was a confluence of three circumstances worth remembering. In the first place, the acceptance by the majority of the countries of a free market economy, opening time offer/demand relations to new possibilities that arose from the legitimate use of company and contract freedom. This type of economy unleashes liberalization processes on informative products and services that currently continue progressing. As an example, one can

underline the governing board of the European Union on the liberalization of information and communication infrastructures, that establish freedom of competition between private titularity initiatives.

Secondly, the innovations of communication and information technologies have had special importance, with multiplying effects on time demands for new products and informative services. These innovations imply saving time in the access to the sources, and at a progressively lower cost. Saving time in household tasks can be a starting point that amplifies on observing the increase in the offers made from the radio and television, and the possibilities opened up by the circulation of information on Internet.

The third fact that can contrast with the two previous ones is a confirmed reality: time continues being something scarce, above all in specific ages and working circumstances, but the time offer increases. This paradox (abundance and scarcity of time, at the same time) has its roots in economic, working and social questions. A greater appreciation of time has a repercussion on a better analysis of the decisions on time offer and demand, with special attention to products and services in which time constitutes a principal object of the relation. A consequence of the greater and better evaluation of time can be the increase of specialized informative products and services, particularly in the press and television sphere.

The conjunction of these three factors contributes to time shaping, in the current information society, a proper market that can be called the *time market*.

B) *Characteristics*

The notes that characterize time are reflected in the characteristics of the market that carries its name. The time offer/demand relation in a specific sphere of relations introduces variables that make it difficult to limit characteristics with a generalized application to the markets. In an attempt at abstraction and synthesis one can point out that the time market is characterized for being *personal, flexible, and value-estimable*.

al) *Personal*. Time is time in as far as it has a person as a subject. Only with reference to a person can one affirm that time is finite, indelible, and an object of use and enjoyment. Machines consume time if a person is interested in measuring time; if not, there is no machine time. Animals do *not know how to spend time*, although they do so.

The time market is therefore a market between persons and for persons; it is a personal market because it demands the presence of persons (with or without things), with an independence of what these persons *are like* because of reasons of sex, race, age, culture and religion. To the personal character of the time market, one can apply Spaemann's affirmation on human beings: «they are not simply what they appear to be; they have their proper nature»¹⁵⁴. The time market is not an impersonal one where the king is the clock, an instrument which serves to measure time according to mechanisms made perfect by human intelligence and which has as an obliged reference, day and night, created by the Uncreated.

The market where time offers and demands are related has proper rules and its activity, on some occasions, may seem to escape human decision, e.g. the relentless timetables of the beginning, the development and the end of a computerized activity. However, the timetable (like the calendar) is the consequence of a human decision. God created day and night; man divided the day into 24 hours but did not obtain an absolute exactitude, although the ticking deviation is as small as one second in one million years¹⁵⁵.

154 Spaemann, Robert (1997), p. 16.

155 The history of the mechanical clock endorses man's creativity in the measurement of time. Legend attributes the invention of the first mechanical clock to the monk Geberto (later Pope Silvester) in the last decades of the 10th century. Three periods can be differentiated in the evolution of the mechanical clock. a) 1290-1656, mechanical clockmaking prior to the pendulum, with a precision of up to one minute a day; halfway through the 14th century people accepted that an hour had 60 minutes and a minute, 60 seconds. b) 1656-1950, the clockmaking period from the pendulum, with a precision of a second a day. c) 1950 to the present time, period of electronic clockmaking which began with the oscillating quartz clock, with a precision of a thousandth second a day, and advanced with «control clocks» or time bases of caesium, like that of the Federal Institute of Physics and Technolo-

The hours may seem to be long or short according to how they appear to be to the people¹⁵⁶. But time on the market is not governed by what *seems to be* but by what is, following the general acceptance of the persons.

The personal nature of the time market is projected in the *things* or in the *rights* that the persons put into circulation as objects of offer or demand. At present the significance of time stands out in the value and significance of a brand whose continuity on the market deserves positive or negative evaluations, according to how long it has been on the market and how well it is known, or because of the *expiry* date of its use and consumption.

The freedom of the time market is linked to its personal nature. People use time freely, on a specific activity. It is a freedom that looks towards the future and makes the future over the strictly temporal considerations. As Polo affirmed, «only a freely possessed future is future in a strict sense, otherwise it stops being so». In other words, «without freedom the future would only be a dimension in time»¹⁵⁷.

Personal freedom on the time market can try to multiply hours of sixty minutes, trying to make them more rentable. The rules of this market admit filling in the hours well, giving them better contents, but the risk of depersonalizing time should be avoided because in such a case the intended multiplication would have a multiplier that would annul: zero.

b) *Flexible*. The personal character of the time market facilitates understanding the second note that typifies it: flexibility. The time necessities that are, or can be satisfied in this market are as varied as the free decisions of the persons who gather on it. The time offers and demands, related on the time market, offer uncountable ways of responding to the time necessity and the demands formulated by products and services, especially those of an informative nature. From the application of the mobile type

gy in Braunschweig (Germany) that serves as a reference to regulate other clocks of common use and where estimations show that in one million years it will have an exactitude difference of only one second.

156 Shakespeare wrote: «Pleasures and action make the hours seem short». *Othello*, II, 3.

157 Polo, Leonardo (1999), p. 231.

to the printing press in the second half of the 15th century right down to the present information society, the time market has shown growing flexibility, not only in its speedy use but also in its adaptation to necessities, with processes that make more flexible rigid timetables or indeterminate waiting periods, with greater continuity in the services rendered and in time occupation by the users. This flexibility currently offers some peculiarities, among which three can be highlighted.

In the first place, the time market makes it possible for a person to be in the paradoxical situation previously announced, of experiencing abundance and scarcity of time at the same time. There is plenty of time for some activities and a lack of it for others. In this sense the time dispute between professional activity and leisure activity is obvious. This paradox precisely rotates round the flexible nature of the time market that allows for distributions between closely related occupations: transport and working activity; time dedicated to watching television and the time spent on reading, etc. The balance on the market is linked to the balance in the decision on time, frequently on the need to be informed and to acquire knowledge, and the necessity of travelling from one place to another, or doing household tasks.

Secondly, market flexibility is seen in the growth of products and services that demand time. These are new ways of being ahead of the time offer that provokes competition in the use of time by people, and a cascade of specialized products that try to attract reduced sectors of the public. This can be seen in the diversity of entertainment, the plurality in teaching and learning methods, and the applications that reduce the time of product/service delivery.

Thirdly, the flexible nature of the time market explains the constant attempts to *compress* it, which is necessary in some sectors to optimize the result of business activity. Order and intensity of work, and speed in information transmission can increase time's output. This is why the *added value of time* means less time to do a task, leaving spare time for other activities¹⁵⁸. This condition of a flexible market deserves continuous study

158 Gregory, Ian, C.; Rawling, Simon, B. (1997), p. 29.

and consideration because using time well very often results in reducing costs, in the measure that one does more in less time, or obtains a higher production level than one's rivals in the same time. There is an increasing acceptance of the idea that a qualitative jump lies ahead of the economies of companies, which leads them to going from traditional *scale* economies to *time* economies¹⁵⁹. Economizing time is making a better use of its natural flexibility. Time economies are focussed at finding a greater and more profitable use in the offer/demand and supply/consumption relations. It is a goal with the ideal objective of having no time wastage because time is irrecuperable, with no possible recycling.

Time economy is sought especially from the demand. The time market applied to the information market is basically a market with a demand primacy. On some occasions this demand discovers necessities of time use that may launch plenty of informative products which may overwhelm the person offering his time, making him hand it over with a passive and conformist attitude to whatever is offered to him. This attitude is frequent when *time acceleration* processes are involved that lead to decisions being adopted in the vertigo of *change for the sake of change*, with uncertainty in the time offer because of the speed and *urgency* in the response that motivates the demand. Irreflexive *zapping* that goes from one television channel to another can be an aggressive answer to an aggressive demand. In short, it is a battle, though old, between hurry and serenity.

c) *Value-estimable*. Personal freedom flexibly manifested in likes, preferences, culture levels, etc. gives a destination to people's time. A decision preceeded by thought marks the use of time; it is a fruit of the will with a somewhat intangible origin and therefore, difficult to measure¹⁶⁰. But difficulty in measuring does not mean an evaluation difficulty. Not always can time's value be exactly quantified; however, it use-

¹⁵⁹ McKenna, Regis (1997), p. 133.

¹⁶⁰ Who puts a price to a thought? The answer comes from San Juan de la Cruz: «One sole thought of man is worth more than the whole world; therefore only God is worthy of it». *Dichos de luz y amor*, 34. *Vida y obras de San Juan de la Cruz*, BAC, 6th edition, Madrid, 1972, p. 419.

fulness can be estimated, and by comparison calculations can be made that can conclude in the fixing of a price. Time as a means of exchange on the market admits counterservices in the way of money, prestige, information, knowledge¹⁶¹. The grade of immaterialness of the counterservice makes the quantified measurement more difficult, but this does not mean that it has no value. For example, an idea that successfully remains throughout time has an immaterial active value with reflection on the balance. Commerce funds, the countable value of a brand, a patent or a right is usually quantified when it is the object of transmission, which does not fail to be a countable limitation because the value exists although it is not for sale.

Time is an important factor in the configuration of the concept of value. In Capranico's opinion the concept of value in contemporary economy is not based so much on the existence of a material asset as in the realization of a system in time¹⁶². The system or total of organized relations that operates with autonomy in social spheres acquires value in the measure that it inserts itself in time and lasts. Time adds value to the system or deducts it; that is why there is an *added* value of time and a *lost* value of time. To add a value of time is to make a better use of it; to deduct value is to lose time. The time that good use of it adds can result in a caudal of time that is wealth. On the contrary, time not well used not only deducts value from the system; it is also time that is lost, dead or irrecoverable. It corresponds to the person to give value to time and make his occupation conclude in diligent or negligent work.

C) *Concept*

What is a time market? Answering this question by contributing a concept, implies previously discovering the structure, activity and purpose of this market.

¹⁶¹ Elchardus, Mark (1991), pp. 69-70.

¹⁶² Cfr. Sergio Capranico, prefazione all'edizione italiana de Christian Grönroos: *Management e Marketing dei servizi*, Torino, 1994, p. X.

a) *Structure*. The time market structure responds to the various ways of organizing its use, and to the place or situation that facilitates the offer/demand relation of time. On the other hand, the structure of this market has delimitations of a juridical, economical and social nature. The legal liberalization of the information market and the supports of audio-visual circulation (e.g. in television, telephony, cable) have a direct repercussion on the time market structure. In the area of advertisements shown on television, the rules that prohibit specific types of advertisements, or the emission of programmes when there is a prevision of a children's audience make the time market adopt structures that conform to this legislation, with hour distributions with economical considerations that are adequate to such determinations.

The time market structure has, in the home, an important centre, as it is a place where people usually live and there are material supports or the equipment that allows the varied use of time, especially that destined to leisure, entertainment, information. The home has a meaning in the measure that it is occupied and that the persons who live there formulate time offers and demands, with the corresponding decisions that are fruit of intellectual processes, more or less reflexive and pondered. The act of reading a newspaper is the consequence of deciding to use time, and this decision can be facilitated by the fact of receiving the newspaper at home everyday.

b) *Activity*. At present the concept of activity is linked to time, to the point of being able to say with Elchardus that activity in general can be defined as *the use of time*¹⁶³. Activity on the time market is human action that consumes time to establish relations between time offers and demands: *the time of marketing with time*.

Time becomes active in the task of persons who use hours, minutes or days to produce and commercialize goods and services, or to consume them. When attention is centred in time as an object of offer and demand on the market of information products, activity is limited to the temporal framework of the information market. In this market time is an object of

¹⁶³ Elchardus, Mark (1991), p. 70.

use with basically immaterial activities or those of the intelligence, to read, listen, or view some contents whose origins are equally intangible and later materialized in the support or medium that emits information, entertainment, etc. As in the free market economy, information and communication are known as prime materials¹⁶⁴; time acquires special importance in the information market development and in its influence in the markets of goods and services.

The *activity* to use, mediate or circulate time that offers information or knowledge is present in all human work. Strictly physical work consumes time that leaves a caudal (great or small) of experience, satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the intelligence of the person who carries it out. In all work there is time expenditure and growth, or not, of the intelligence. The measurement of this growth is not governed by the clock or by the remuneration of the work. There is an added immaterial value that the intelligence recognizes, the memory remembers and the will makes operative when it considers opportune.

c) *Objectives*. As in all markets that accept the company's freedom and the choice of goods and services, the generic objective of the time market is to satisfy necessities and its specific aim, the necessities that realize and satisfy the encounter between the time offer/demand.

The objective pursued is to achieve the interchange of time for products that serve to cover its use. The balance between the time offer and demand is a goal not always attained, because very often the interchange is converted into change that favours only one of the parts. It can be said that adequate time evaluation for the persons who participate in the relation radiates from the balance or interchange.

The time referred to a specific activity has as an objective a result, a product or service that demands time from persons who can offer it. From this perspective time can be evaluated by the result, quantifying it in money according to how much the consumer wishes to pay¹⁶⁵. At present the price of time in relation with work faces a problem that is not

¹⁶⁴ Rifkin, Jeremy (1996), p. 277.

¹⁶⁵ Gregory, Ian, C.; Rawling, Simon, B. (1997), p. 31.

new: in some cases there is lack of work that occupies time; in others, there is lack of time to fill with work that should be carried out.

Time has a price tag put on it on the market that bears its name, e.g. with remunerations and costs in reason of seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years. Time is filled, among other occupations, with work; hence, putting a price to time can mean putting the price to work. *Market* economy, *work* economy, and *time* economy are three areas that surround the lives of people in the present media society.

Time economy counts with the economy of *signs* that try to «superate in units of time that are increasingly shorter, spaces that are increasingly longer, and reach an increasing number of consumer/receptors»¹⁶⁶. The effect of this game of economies may lead to beneficial results for the society; a specific case are the advances in public health. There are also perverse effects especially in the market of goods and services, e.g. the growing *aggressiveness* in the offer/demand relations lead to a brand having not more than six months on the market before being copied¹⁶⁷, and to processes in which the serene balance is lost in commercial relations.

On other hand, time economy experiments changes in tone with the innovations in information and communication technologies that manage to make more in less time and facilitate the road to what Rifkin describes as «an economy practically without work»¹⁶⁸, that should «not be interpreted as a total absence of human effort in time»¹⁶⁹, but as a new orientation of human tasks.

Working is deciding in time, whether these are decisions like moving the lever to turn the crane of a big excavator, or pressing the computer key *enter* to order the purchase of a packet of stockmarket shares. Experience

¹⁶⁶ Romano, Vicente (1998), p. 75.

¹⁶⁷ Guardia, Ramón (1998), p. 25: «Statistics show that new products are copied in an average time of six months».

¹⁶⁸ Id., p. 355.

¹⁶⁹ Rifkin himself assumes the *social economy* in which volunteer work has a special significance. Id., p. 283.

shows that with a greater number of decisions taken in lesser time, the risk of error increases. An erroneous decision usually harms the person who decides *without adequate time*, because speed does not necessarily imply making a good choice when deciding.

In agreement with the previous considerations on the structure, activity and objectiveness of the time market, the following concept can be given: *the time market is the physical centre or the intellectual sphere where time interchanges that contribute to satisfying necessities of a material or immaterial nature are promoted and realized.*

5.2. Information and age

Age is the accumulation of irrepeatable time that marks the earthly existence of a person. Age admits numerous classifications according to reference to the passage of time in human activities, material things, physical processes, etc. With a view to what is now of interest, attention is centred on two types: *subjective* age and *objective* age. The subjective consideration contemplates the perfection of the person, it attends to the development of the life of intelligence, to the acquiring of knowledge that is proportionate to physiological growth. The objective consideration of age has a chronological significance, quantifying the time of existence following the course of the days, months, years. Both ages should keep a relation and balance in their development, although in fact their growth levels can be different. A person whose objective age is 20 years may have a subjective age that is inferior to that of another person, of his very own socio-economic condition, who is 18 years old.

To grow in subjective age is to enrich oneself with ideas that allow one to *see the future*, foresee changes, advance solutions, attain the development of theoretical and practical talents. The capacity of forecast does not necessarily have the guarantee of verifying it, because the uncertainty of the time of life accompanies any human foresight. That is why a sign of maturity in the age of intelligence is putting all one's resources in the continuity of the communication of knowledge, with independence of the life of the person who delivers the knowledge. This matter has a great deal to do with ethics, as age and ethics have a close relation.

Polo affirms that «ethics is the way of using the proper time according to which the person grows as a complete person, not only somatically»¹⁷⁰. In the use of time to grow in the life of intelligence, ethics plays an important role. That is why discerning on ethical behaviour in time offer/demand relations requires an adequate development of the subjective age, with a critical level and the capacity of emitting opinions, accepting or rejecting time offers or demands including the times destined to informative products. Ethical behaviour, being personal cannot be limited to ethics that are controlled and measured by the clock.

For Elias¹⁷¹ time in its objective or objectivised consideration can be understood as something instrumental at the service of people. A person, by himself, cannot shorten or lengthen his chronological age. However, in the age of intelligence it is possible to advance or go backwards; the innovations in the field of communication and information technologies have an important influence in this advance or retrogression.

Advancing is not equivalent to accelerating, and making good use of something is not synonymous with going faster. Time *acceleration* and *compression* can be obstacles to the growth of intelligence. O'Driscoll and Gerald¹⁷² declared that choices made in *real time* can be adopted without knowing their consequences. Ethical behaviour in the informative time market implies reflexion, analysis of the options that can be made with the speed adequate to the complexity of the decision. On occasions the decision calls for a pause, to *detain* the time that arrives *accel-*

¹⁷⁰ Polo, Leonardo (1993), p. 110.

¹⁷¹ Elias, Norbert (1989): «If the verb form of the concept "time" existed in Spanish e.g. "temporize", it would be easy to explain and understand that the action of "looking at the clock" fulfills the objective of synchronizing in itself positions in the succession of one or more processes. The instrumental character of time would then be clear» (p. 53). «Precisely this is what clocks are: only a physical *continuum* changing into human manufacture, normalized as a reference chart and a measure of other continuously changing social and physical entities in specific societies» (p. 57). «Whether they are sand, sun or quartz clocks, the measurements of time are instruments that men create for specific purposes» (pp. 116-117).

¹⁷² O'Driscoll, Jr.; Gerald, P. (1996), p. 3.

erating from the demand or which is in an *accelerated* situation, because of the person who makes the offer. The pause makes a time space for the serenity that analyses advantages and disadvantages, favourable or perverse consequences of the decision. A robot (a result of human work) can outdo a person in speed and performance exactitude. It is a machine programmed by man and is created to perform, but a robot can never freely decide to do something.

This serenity is singularly desirable for those who programme computerized instruments that adopt decisions previously determined, and which are answered with the inexorable passage of the seconds, e.g. the cascade of decisions *preprogrammed* to be operative on the stockmarket.

Time *acceleration* may cause perverse effects, inversely proportional to the subjective age of the person who should decide. Forcing decisions in *real time* places the person with a lower critical level or an immature intellectual capacity in a position of inferiority. Quick *reflexive* movements made on pressing a key do not have the same consequences when it is a child playing with a computer or *zapping* with television programmes for adults. Information and communication technologies proportion valuable instruments to grow in the life of intelligence with greater facility than in previous generations, but not necessarily. Knowing how to use a computer and having a more or less complex knowledge about computers does not always lead to greater levels of reflexion and reasoning. Possessing simplified knowledge, reduced to «yes» or «no», or «more» or «less» makes a decision easier to take, but does not mean that it may be the right one and freely made. Here a key word crosses in the use of time: education. To educate is to grow in the life of intelligence through the acquiring of knowledge, much of which can be reached with the use of computers, though not all.

Knowledge and experience are acquired in the present, not in the past or in the future. Educating to decide in the present is a basic task for the protagonists of the information market. When one decides from the past, this is a *melancholic* decision that flees from the present without facing the future. On the extreme opposite side is the decision that endeavours to superate the present to take a seat in the future, the proper attitude of an *euphoric* person for whom the past lacks importance. The equilibrium of

thinking of *today and the present moment*¹⁷³, which moves melancholies and euphorias to a distance, calls for a permanent education for all ages.

The possibilities of being informed, acquiring knowledge and divulging it marks the rhythm of growth of a civilization. A nation that shuts itself up in its past, with no other horizon except its *yesterday* cristalizes in subjective age and limits change to the chronological passage of time, growing old with the rhythm of the days. On the contrary, when there is a flow of information in the free market of ideas, the possibilities of access to knowledge, facts, judgements, opinions, and forms of entertainment increase, and makes it possible for the subjective age of people to mature in the time offer/demand relations. In this positive consideration, «information acquires a temporal hue on getting the changes to be progressive and slow, allowing time for them to be assimilated and adapting them to new situations»¹⁷⁴. The change will be intelligent when this is *informed*, basically with a decision that leads to previously pondering its pros and cons. Change that is not reasoned is usually the fruit of ignorance, compatible with the decisions of persons who total quite a few lustrums of objective age.

Information expiry and variability imposes a use of time that makes the incorporation of new information possible, frequently a channel of new knowledge. As time does not admit stopping¹⁷⁵, the absence or ignorance of information can brake learning processes that are especially necessary in our days, in which «knowledge acquired ten years ago and not renovated loses a great deal of its value»¹⁷⁶.

Frequently time interchange is information interchange. The balance in interchange action is necessary to obtain an adequate offer/demand rela-

173 Pascal expresses this with singular beauty: «We hardly think of the present; and if we do so, it is only to ask for light to deal with the future. The present is never our objective: the past and the present are our means, only the future is our objective. This way we will never live, only hope to live; and getting ready always to be happy, it is inevitable that we will never be so». 172. Pascal, Blas (1976), p. 41.

174 Cousido, Pilar (1989b), p. 123.

175 «Nothing stops for us», says Pascal; cfr. *Pensamientos*, cit. nº 72, p. 25.

176 EC (1997), p. 24.

tion in the joint decision between who sells and who buys or acquires. A relation is all the more perfect when the information possessed by the two parts is more¹⁷⁷. There is a distortion of the informative relation when one of the participants enjoys a privilege over the time of the other person, and impedes the latter to dispose of a pause to evaluate the contents of the information. *Instantaneous decisions* that lead to the acceptance of a product can be an objective of what is known as *real-time marketing*, where the proper product gives the response to the possible demands of the target purchasers¹⁷⁸. It is an added value that is integrated in the product with the aim of saving time when solving doubts. Some computerized programmes with answers and adaptations *to the liking* of the user can serve as a sample of real-time marketing that facilitates the acceptance of an offer.

Information abundance and the facility to its access can be positive or can overwhelm the person and hinder a free decision, e.g. the facility of communicating through Internet according to the hours, on occasions leads to changing the usual use of time¹⁷⁹. Making access to information easy does not mean that one easily reaches the necessary information. Abundance can suffocate. For Sartori «the facility of the digital era is the facility of a drug»¹⁸⁰. It is not a question of facility but of frivolity, the frivolousness of time leads to frivolous decisions. When a person does not know which is the beginning or end of a decision, it is likely that another person will decide for him; one lives in a second hand way because another person fills up the time. No doubt the abundance of information can lower its price, even making it apparently free of charge. The negative

177 Gregory, Ian, C.; Rawling, Simon, B. (1997), p. 51.

178 «*Real-Time Marketing* is the marketing approach in which personally customized goods or services continuously update themselves to continuously track changing customer need, without intervention by corporate personal, often without conscious or overt input from the customer». Oliver, Richard et alia (1998), pp. 30-32.

179 Leaving aside occupations of a labour nature, this alteration is observed in situations that have contagious effects, as can be the night on weekends which alters, in some people, the natural use of time: living the night as if it were day; one goes to sleep when one should be getting up.

180 Sartori, Giovanni (1997), p. 31.

effect does not proceed from the price but from the conscious or unconscious lack of willpower.

On the other hand, the frivolity that favours the use of time for frivolous information can produce a rejection of tasks with an estimable social value which lose their power of attraction, as a consequence of the permanent circulation of negative information. For instance, one could ask if some news published in the communication media contribute to the social phenomena that justly preoccupies the organisms of the European Union: «young people usually consider the art of politics as something distant, opaque and boring»¹⁸¹.

Time makes a man wise or ignorant. Wisdom can be understood as eternity assumed by the human being who makes it the purpose of his life in time, the eternal *present moment* that he wishes to assume in some time¹⁸². The first step to wisdom is to recognize one's proper ignorance and understand the ignorant; as every wise man has been ignorant, he should respect the ignorant person. A writer in a newspaper understands his readers when he situates himself in a position of being less ignorant than them in what he is communicating, but more ignorant in many other things. Time makes wise a man who prudently conducts his personal and professional life. Time also contributes wisdom when the life of intelligence advances in profound knowledge on specific areas of knowing. The person wise in the use of time fills his life without leaving empty spaces, fills his time with the effort of intelligence, avoids spaces that separate him from himself because time lost is a useless load in life.

The passage of information to knowledge and from this to wisdom, demands time to decant the accumulation of facts, judgements, opinions and ideas that can come together in the reality that one wishes to get to know. In this process there is a double choice: on the one hand, of the object of reflexion; on the other, of the adequate time to realize it. Circum-

181 EC (1997), p. 70.

182 In this sense God is eternal: «un *Nunc* un *Ahora* lasting and immutable, whose way of being is distinguished essentially from that of creatures who are *contingent*». John Paul II, 4.IX.1985.

stances can lead to an optimistic or pessimistic attitude of the future and of the destiny of time¹⁸³. There are occasions in which the choice is not conditioned by optimism or pessimism, but by bewilderment and the lack of harmony between the offer and the demand of time, which sinks the person who needs to choose in ignorance and makes him not know the significance of his time¹⁸⁴.

The wisdom of the informer radicates in filling up involved time through the medium or support that communicates the information. Time solidarity means thinking first of the person who offers it rather than in the necessity of the informer. It is the wisdom of the service from the information that confers *the power of informing* understood as the *power of serving*. The time market is the site for wisdom and for professional ignorance, because there is room to offer time to learn and find a demand open to frivolity or vice versa.

Wisdom in the use of time demands living time in its proper time, without nostalgia of the past (which certainly does not return) or fantasies in the face of a more or less utopic future (with no certainty of being reached). Neither the past nor the future: only ponder about the present. Neither acceleration nor retrogression, only equilibrium. In view of the criticism about the damage caused by speed in the use of time or in the opposite direction, by the damage derived by slowness or indecision, perhaps it would be opportune to analyse whether this criticism is not made by mental structures anchored in the past or fully dedicated to an irreal future. These are time myths that lead to a loss of serenity.

183 «With optimistic expectations, people tend to spend more money and less time on necessary activities, such as household work. With pessimistic expectations, people tend to spend more time and less money on necessary activities». Van Raaij, W. Fred (1991), p. 27.

184 The following answers to a questionnaire is perhaps a manifestation of uncertainty or ignorance: «Forty-three per cent of the persons questioned declared that they lacked time to do all that they wished, a somewhat inferior proportion (31%) declared that they had an excess of time, while a quarter part (26%) said that they did not have an excess of time or a lack of it». Cfr. Cires (1997), p. 358.

5.3. Time and profession

History is rich in examples of professions that originated at a certain time, had their moment of development and plenitude to later disappear. In the area of graphic arts the period in which the profession of linotypist constituted one of the axis of the activity in printing workshops is not too far away in time. At present this profession is only a memory and some linotypes occupy a space in museums. With the passage of time the advances of technologies open up, transform or close down professions. Learning becomes an almost permanent task. Flexibility in professional reconversions makes time acquire greater importance because the period of adaptation is progressively reduced. On the other hand, the accumulation of professional time in people who work in a company constitutes a heritage; it is the *memory* of the company, an essential element for its continuity and to correct mistakes or errors. In this sense Brooking pointed out: «to lose an employee is to lose a piece of the corporate memory»¹⁸⁵.

From the time of its origins commercial activity has rotated round time; the profession of trader has, in time, a factor that determines its professional task¹⁸⁶. Commerce is communication in time; to *communicate* means not only the transmission of information but also the medium or support that makes it possible to inform. In this ample meaning the *communication medium* comprises the copy of a newspaper as well as the electronic mail, the train as well as the cinema.

The activity of the trader within an economy increasingly more planetary finds, in the information society, new opportunities of bettering his way of living and working¹⁸⁷; this is compatible with forms of tension that are

185 Brooking, Annie (1997), p. 9.

186 As Le Goff pointed out, «il mercante fonda la sua attività su ipotesi di cui il tempo è la trama stessa». Le Goff, Jacques (1997), pp. 4-5.

187 COM (97) 390 final, n° 1. A contribution to bring about the desired advance in the way of living and working is offered by the *social marketing corporate* understood as «the development of a managerial activity whose objective is to obtain the compromise of the customers with a specific behaviour of social interest, so that this activity at the same time favours the interests of the

consequences of «new time pressures»¹⁸⁸. Speedy decisions when buying may contribute to an efficient choice, but may also be a consequence of harassment to obtain an impulsive, very slightly pondered decision. The announced passing from consumer marketing to the electronic market¹⁸⁹, perhaps obliges the payment of a bewilderment tax. *The professionalism of haste* to obtain *time pressure* makes it difficult to carry out the «wish that people, in a future information society, could play a full role in the social life of the community»¹⁹⁰.

A profession is acquired with time and also with time stops being *active*. The retirement age in the present information society experiments advancements that in the last quarter century have changed the previous use of time¹⁹¹. We are going through a period of profound change in time organization, with new professions that make it possible to decentralize activities, confiding other companies tasks until now assumed¹⁹². This transformation is manifested in Europe in a special way in the progressive growth of employment assumed by the service sector¹⁹³ where time and work shape new professional jobs. The contribution of intangible elements of special importance in services offer possibilities of communicating values that have, as a support, reasoned arguments that lead to the correct use of time in the profession.

company inasmuch as its position in the market and its image». Guardia Massó, Ramón (1998), p. 69.

188 EC (1997), p. 49.

189 «Good-bye consumer marketing: Welcome to the crossroads of the electronic market». McKenna, Regis (1997), p. 80.

190 EC (1997), p. 58.

191 In the USA the men aged between 54 and 64 who worked in 1970 represented 80%; twenty years afterwards, in 1990, this percentage descended to 65%. In the United Kingdom the evolution has been very similar. In France, this percentage descended from 75% to 40%. In Germany, from 80% to a little more than 50%. Cfr. Sennett, Richard (1998), p. 92.

192 *Id.*, p. 40.

193 «The structure of the employment sector in Europe has changed radically and the services today represent about 65% of the total employment in Europe, while only twenty years ago this was less than 50% of the total employment». COM (97) 390, final, nº 41.

Giving meaning to time, to hours, is a way of giving meaning to work, to leisure, to the fiesta, to rest. Work, leisure, fiestas are occasions of giving meaning to the time of life. The meaning of time in the market can be projected on occupations of a labour, family, religious, leisure, and entertainment type that jointly give a personal and proper meaning to human life. This is why a lazy person is a person voluntarily empty of work who empties his time to fill it up with egoism. On the labour market processes of time offers and demands, that have a beginning and an end, are carried through. The clock is a common instrument to measure the duration between the beginning and end of this process, of each one of the activities that comprise it and of the total. In this sense it could be stated that whoever controls the clock controls the work¹⁹⁴. The time of work is an addition of times¹⁹⁵, the total of many few (minutes, hours) that accumulate contributions of human work or, in an analogous sense, animal effort, mechanical and electronic work, etc.¹⁹⁶. The desire to *compress* time can help to understand its profound significance of the school of eternity. Wanting to reduce time to the minimum, to the infinite part of time, can be an attempt to identify *innovation* and *acceleration* of time to open way to *fashion* as a continuous process in time.

The time market and labour market relation acquires singular interest when it is remembered that «all persons are, at the same time, workers and consumers of somebody else's work»¹⁹⁷; that is why solidarity at

194 A testimony of the 14th century: «Il governatore reale dell'Artois autorizza nel 1355 la popolazione di Aire-sur-la-Lys a costruire una torre companaria, la cui campane suoneranno le ore delle transazioni commerciali e del lavoro degli operai drappieri. L'utilizzazioni, a scopi professionali di una nuova misura del tempo vi è indicata clamorosamente [...] l'orologio comunale è uno strumento di dominazione economica, sociale e politica dei mercanti che reggono il comune». Le Goff, Jacques (1997), p. 14.

195 Bertrand, Hugues; in Chanteau, Jean Pierre; Clerc, Denis (1997), p. 95.

196 It may be of interest to remember the framing of questions, in the decade of the sixties, to the International Office of Work, on considering the study of time as «a technique to determine in the most careful way possible, through a limited number of observations, the time necessary to exercise a specific activity according to the standard of definite performance». *Bureau International du Travail* (1963), p. 301.

197 Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 59.

work means solidarity in time distribution that grants quality to work and to time. As Zamagui correctly pointed out, the new quality of working time is determined by an information necessity and the necessity of workers to relate among themselves¹⁹⁸.

Organizing work is organizing time and on many occasions, vice versa. This raises a question as current as well as debated: the duration of the time of work, or the hours that the working week should comprise. The working week tends to be shorter in its number of hours; its reduction, since the beginning of the century, has been estimated in about 50%¹⁹⁹. Specifically, in 1900 a USA worker in the industrial sector worked 55 hours a week; in 1969, this quantity descended to 38 hours and in 1985, to 36,8 hours²⁰⁰. Another data, referring to the last quarter century: in France in 1970, the total annual working hours were 1,962; in 1995 these were 1,631²⁰¹.

Without entering in the debate on the duration of the working week, a question that should be studied, bearing in mind the multiple circumstances that affect it (country, professions, education levels, economic situation, etc.), it is generally accepted that «the time of flexible work is necessary to improve the efficiency, increase the opportunities of work, promote permanent learning and reconcile working and family life»²⁰². There are two problems closely related in the debate on the working day: the hours of work and the timetables of work. The desired flexibility appears to refer principally to the timetables, but to a good measure is linked to the number of hours worked. There are signs that the topic of work time is in a phase of being radically reopened. «It is very probable that at the end of this millenium the hours of conventional work —the weekly forty hours, five days a week— will be more the exception than the rule»²⁰³.

198 Zamagui, Staefano (1999), p. 43.

199 Cfr. Taddéi, Dominique; in Chanteau, Jean Pierre; Clerc, Denis (1997), p. 150.

200 Hamermesh, Daniel S.; Rees, Albert (1998), p. 36.

201 Chanteau, Jean Pierre; Clerc, Denis (1997), p. 178.

202 EC (1997), p. 47.

203 Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (95), I Introduction, I.1.

There seems to be an obstacle in the root of the problem: the tendency to think more in the *post* than in the work itself. The 35 weekly hours of work proposed and defended in some sectors present the necessity of adequately filling up the remaining 133 hours which make up the total number of hours of a week. Perhaps the objective should not exclusively be to work less, but to work better, to achieve work for all who are in a condition of doing so.

Currently the time market with reference to the information market presents an abundance of time offers and demands, above all in the audiovisual media. The majority of Europeans spend over 21 hours a week watching television. This leads to the question whether the hours and minutes of leisure are being *devalued* and if there is a risk of a loss of *quality* in the contents that fill up this time. The fact of dedicating this number of hours to television does not necessarily mean spending time in a better way.

Work time, including that of a day of work acquires value in the measure that it contributes to the perfection of who uses it and serves to satisfy people's general and individual necessities. A human being is neither work nor time; he works in a period of time whose total duration he is unaware of. The rules of the game when measuring time has in the clock an instrument admitted by all, but this instrument is at the service of its protagonist, the person. More than the working time of a person, it is important that the person works with joy in time²⁰⁴. The clock does not measure happiness, or good humour. From this perspective one can find the reason of the paradox commented before: «in spite of the reduction in the time of work, the sensation of *time scarcity* prevails»²⁰⁵.

204 «I saw that there was nothing better for man than to enjoy his work». Ecclesiastes, 3, 22.

205 «If persons continue organizing their occupation time (household work, administration) and their leisure time *as before*, while the time and the organization of work in the whole world evolves in different directions, caution is called for with regard to the difficulty of imagining a model of life different from that of the traditional cycle of seven days». Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 33.

In addition to the traditional tension between time and work is another preoccupation that palpitates many working spheres. If *machines* continue invading the sphere of people's work, what future awaits the worker? Rifkin points out that «during the practical totality of the modern age the value of people has been measured by the output of their work. Now that the value of products manufactured by man tends to be progressively more insignificant and irrelevant, in an increasingly more automatized world, new ways of defining the value of a person and human relations should be explored»²⁰⁶. And he adds, «now that *the sale of one's proper time* loses value, the labyrinth of commercial relations constructed on this agreement is also threatened»²⁰⁷.

This exposition which encourages the rendering of services in a social economy²⁰⁸, perhaps relegates the consideration of a person as an axis of time and work. If it is accepted that man *sells time*, the organization of work may be left in the hands of market law. The rule of economy is the necessity of the people, not of the market. When time is considered as a merchandise separated from the person, the hours of another person's work is liable to speculation. Trying to maintain a balance by limiting hours does not necessarily mean *more time* for man. On the other hand, man cannot sell time because it is not his. It is enough to observe that when time is put on sale, immediately *submerged time* appears. This is time that is not accounted for, to the effects of getting an unemployment subsidy which allows for work that is paid for and which accumulates in the payment of a subsidy for not working. In short, the right to work is above the working and commercial relation.

The question is how to create new jobs without trying to, at any cost, maintain old posts for which there is no socially binding time. New professions on the market in general, and specifically on the information market try to assume new technologies and think more in the con-

206 Rifkin, Jeremy (1996), p. 20.

207 Id., p. 279.

208 «The defense and service groups of the third sector are the lightning conductors that allow to divert the growing frustrations of an increasing number of unemployed people». Id., p. 329.

tents than in the supports, in the circulation of the ideas rather than in the conquest of an audience progressively wearied under so much pressure.

On the horizon of the working day appears, among other new possibilities, the telework that can facilitate the remodelling of hours and the generalization of partial time employment²⁰⁹. According to the *Informe sobre el Teletrabajo* elaborated by the European Commission in 1998, more than 4 million Europeans carry out their working activities through telework²¹⁰. On the other hand, the fact that one of the advantages of telework is directed towards the interest of *what is being done* instead of *where one is going to work*²¹¹ is not exempt of risks, like the negative effects of isolation and sedentary work²¹². If time acquires meaning in the measure that it is relationship between persons, isolating the worker may be a way of isolating time, which is equivalent to reducing the human meaning of time and fomenting antisocial individualisms. The hours may be flexible in the carrying out of a profession, in the sense of offering various possibilities of time and places to work. Together with the fixed hours in offices or the place which is the company centre, there is an increase in the offer of *compressed* hours that accumulate all the working hours in four days a week, or transfers professional tasks to the home. It may seem that the control over the person and his time is greater at the company site than in the home. However, the electronic follow-up systems exert a greater, and on some occasions, distressing and overwhelming control²¹³.

²⁰⁹ Huws, Ursula (1995), p. 2.

²¹⁰ European Commission (1998), 1.1. p. 9. The cited Commission understands that telework is any kind of work that is free from *time and place* links, using telecommunication and telematic technologies. Cfr. Id., 2.2. p. 18.

²¹¹ Id., 1.2. p. 10.

²¹² «These forms of life, often associated with *non physiological* hours, if extended through a population, can increase the risk of ailments related with inactivity such as obesity, muscularskeletal disorders and cardiovascular diseases». EC (1997), p. 50.

²¹³ «The time of flexibility is the time of a new power. Flexibility begets disorder, but not freedom from restraint». Sennett, Richard (1998), pp. 58-59.

The demand to have less working time or a reduction in the working day show a desire to have more *spare time*. What is understood by free time?

In principle, free disposal of time does not necessarily mean absence of time. «*Spare time* may refer both to the time organized to respond to social necessities, as well as to a species of free area in which each person discovers his expression and personal independence»²¹⁴. The Greek term which is the source of the word *school* invokes repose, free time for a productively intellectual task. On the other hand, «work and free time do not exhaust man's relations with time»²¹⁵; there are other occupations that fill up time.

In our days there is a presence (at least in theory) in the majority of the countries²¹⁶, but this freedom of time in fact does not exist when one's own time is in somebody else's hands²¹⁷. The free time that rotates in improving the *existence of a person* is the duration of human activity freely chosen, without any dependence of a labour or professional nature that tends to satisfy immaterial or material necessities, proper or belonging to somebody else. It is time dedicated to the future to realize opportunities that the person wishes to explore, an initiative of the intelligence that adventures to freely fill up time. This is why social initiative in free time finds an adequate site to achieve one of the desired goals (among others) of the information society: «foment the equality between men and women and reorganize professional and daily life»²¹⁸. If by value, one understands (in economic terms) the benefit that represents the difference between the benefit received and the price paid by the consumer, free

214 «Likewise one can distinguish between imposed time (defined as the total of work time and of time dedicated to household tasks) and spare time. If we observe the situation from an annual perspective, the relation between imposed time and spare time has varied from 51.3%-49.7% in 1974, to 44.2%-55.8%, in 1984». Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 47.

215 Grillo, Andrea (1999), p. 71.

216 Mothé, Daniel (1998), p. 37.

217 Romano, Vicente (1998), p. 37.

218 COM (97) 390 final, nº 18.

time acquires value in the measure that the benefit is obvious in relation with other possible uses.

Among the opportunities leisure offers and which stand out are intellectual formation and household work that is not related with the profession and the activity of the housewife. This data leads one to request the equipment of time for these tasks because «in spite of the relative material well-being of the European society and the availability of numerous household apparatus that allow one to save time, in the majority of the households there still exists a scarcity of time (calculated in an average of 20 hours a week) for non-working activities»²¹⁹. From this reality Alacevich's statement acquires special interest²²⁰; that time free from work is not necessarily unoccupied time; the tasks of family and social life can make this a very occupied time, among other reasons, because the concept of *fiesta* has not always been considered as *leisure*.

How to occupy leisure? Time demands to give a response to this answer (with products and services) increase, especially those that circulate on the information market. For Mothé, a person has greater access possibilities to the benefits of leisure in the measure that he works more²²¹. This statement should be understood in a relative sense, as access possibilities are not necessarily linked with working more but with greater or lesser sensitivity, likes, hobbies, etc. of those who occupy their spare time. As for the cost of occupying this time, there is a variety of possibilities of action that if, considered carefully, may cause surprise, e.g. it is cheaper for a family to watch and listen to an opera directly televised from the Scala of Milan (without travelling or ticket expenses) than going out to dinner at the restaurant on the corner of the street. The cost and the value of leisure moves in the level of intellectual (immaterial and material) satisfaction given it by the person who uses time.

²¹⁹ EC (1997), p. 49.

²²⁰ Alacevich, Franca (1999), p. 10, note 1.

²²¹ Mothé, Daniel (1998), p. 53.

5.4. Culture, time, information

A) *Culture and leisure*

According to Spaemann²²², culture in an ample sense is «order and significance of life, in a social space and with a common history». Culture is manifested in «the formation of sensitivity and character visible in *the way of perceiving*»²²³. Hence, culture is not only what is received but also the way of perceiving new contributions that form or deform the sensitivity and character of a person. The right to culture, to enriching the life of intelligence in areas of well-being, requests an exercise of freedom; it is the personal right of the person over whatever concession made by the State.

For Grillo all that is *culture* of man (covering from how he eats, dresses, talks, sits, sleeps, and where he lives) is part of the essential elements in the determination of the concept of time and fiesta²²⁴. From this perspective it is understood that to enjoy oneself, to play or climb a mountain, can be ways of *cultivating time*, of contributing to a culture. The election of the *way* one wishes to occupy one's time is a task that requires intelligence. But as intelligence is nourished with ideas and in general, the *intellectual* is who cultivates ideas, there is a risk of a dictatorship of ideas imposed by *intelligent* minorities. This risk is reduced and the culture sphere widened when the intelligent person first thinks, more than in himself, in the necessities and interests of the intelligence life of people. These are necessities and general interests that in fact freely circulate on the time market but its basically intangible nature, on occasions, makes adequate legal help difficult.

The abundance of time demands confers power to those who act as *operators of knowledge* and mediate in the task of occupying time spaces. Time mediation should stimulate the positive attitude of the target which is the public; the advancement or retrogression of a civilization depends on this attitude, as each civilization is a specific way of occupying time.

²²² Cited in Llano, Alejandro (1988), p. 56.

²²³ Llano, Alejandro (1988), p. 57.

²²⁴ Grillo, Andrea (1999), p. 79.

In the opinion of Sennett, time conditions in the new capitalism that prevails in the present society provokes conflicts between the nature and experience of people's lives; experience disturbs time and in some way conditions or impedes people from forming their characters with solid guidelines²²⁵. The fact has consequences on culture and in the way of occupying leisure.

The term *leisure* has shaped an industry that produces goods and services and is a term frequently linked with spare time, a time of enjoyment. Pieper underlines that leisure «is not only connected with external acts such as a pause at work, spare time, weekends, permissions, vacations; leisure is a state of the soul»²²⁶. Culture and leisure have a close and often intangible relationship that occupies the time of the intelligence, driven by a will that wishes to decide freely. Freedom is necessary for people to dispose of their leisure, with the natural risk of irresponsibility which could lead to a person being idle; idleness is an emptiness of time and is usually difficult to remedy. Those who govern nations know this well: a bored nation presents optimum conditions for criticism and rebellion. Man's history has plentiful examples of revolutions that began with generalized yawns.

We live in a period not lacking in eagerness of governing other people's time. There is an inflation demand of other people's time and an increase in the advertising slogans of informative products and services. Managing his own time can elude a person in this information society if he adopts a passive, acrimonious behaviour, if he ignores or wishes to ignore the wealth of his time. «The communication media, both traditional and new, can make him erroneously think that he is managing his time when he uses it to zap from one television channel to another, from one radio station to another, when accepting a *gift* of informative or entertainment contents that he is actually paying for, at least with his time»²²⁷.

225 Sennett, Richard (1998), p. 31.

226 Pieper, Josef (1998), pp. 44-45.

227 With regard to this point some reflections made in Gavin, Neil T. (editor) are interesting. (1998).

Competitiveness in the time demand to occupy leisure is desirable, but this competitiveness should be compatible with the «cultural, educational and social variety» of countries, regions, etc.²²⁸. A negative experience of new information and communication technologies is not having managed to activate «the generation or acquisition of knowledge, and even less that of knowing»²²⁹; this distressing experience should be pondered with responsibility. Teaching knowledge, with value in the life of intelligence, is a task that allows leisure to participate in cultural advancement. Leisure and education are compatible and complementary, and the time market is a site to give and receive ideas, a market open to generalized education. But as with all that where ignorance is present, the activity of obtaining leisure time needs a personal initiative to stop being ignorant.

When a proper culture does not count with leisure time, it runs a risk of being invaded by outside cultures that are not always reconcilable. These are cultures that the person only recognizes in appearance, as it is something artificially superimposed. Through this way the cultural structure imposed can modify the sense of time, and on occasions substitutes the *human condition* of own's proper time²³⁰. On the contrary, few tasks are so esteemed as the time generously given to contribute towards the cultural wealth of people. There are situations in which leisure is covered by products and services that attend material necessities, partially or totally promoted from persuasive activities (generally advertising) that end in accelerated decisions, forcing the *tempo* of leisure.

B) *Leisure and time*

The home is the natural site where one gains «knowledge about the human sense of time»²³¹, in the expression of Llano. It is knowledge that

228 EC (1997), pp. 66 & 67.

229 «With a view to the EC report cited, *to know* is the *distilled* knowledge that is derived by experience in life, as well as cultural and social sciences, ethics and philosophy». EC (1997), p. 18.

230 Etzioni, Amitai (1991), p. 24.

231 Llano, Alejandro (1998), p. 131.

has, in the family, its best school because it is there where personal responsibility takes its first steps; that is why for centuries the period of childhood was interlaced between leisure and household work. The quality of life depends on the time one has available to attend to the *occupations* of the home. Frequently, the time spent travelling to one's place of work reduces the attention given to household necessities. It is thought that telework can contribute to resolving this real problem²³², although with the previously mentioned drawbacks.

Leisure in the home is the total of time that adds or deducts value, according to the condition of personal time of those who integrate the home. Leisure in the home is organized, in the opinion of some authors, in the «way of personal consumption»²³³ or personal management, because the destination of many of these activities is their consumption by persons outside the home.

The changes in the organization of labour work has repercussions on leisure time in the home. The phaseout between labour time and time at home has still not been superated, in spite of the values of humanity and disinterest which frame home leisure and confirm that leisure «lives from the affirmation»²³⁴. The relation between media use and leisure at home is one of the questions that is of greatest social, not only advertising, interest²³⁵.

Perhaps because of an excessive identification between the concepts of leisure and entertainment (to a good extent, a consequence of the facilities conferred by computer innovation), people go so far as saying that «everything is entertainment»²³⁶. However, the significance of these two terms leads to the conclusion that leisure is not only entertainment; there are other possibilities of occupying one's spare time²³⁷. Entertainment

²³² Commissione Europea (1998), 2.2.1., p. 19.

²³³ Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 69.

²³⁴ Pieper, Josef (1998), p. 47.

²³⁵ On this point, vid., among others, Huysmans, Frank (1996), p. 495.

²³⁶ «Everything is entertainment». McKenna, Regis (1997), p. 72.

²³⁷ Du Roy, Oliver; Feys, J.C.; Meyer, A.V. (1990), p. 52.

may be integrated in the current concept of culture, but neither is all cultural activity entertainment nor can any type of entertainment be qualified as a cultural contribution. Time to enjoy oneself is a matter wrapped up in subjectivity because every person *enjoys himself* with what satisfies him; however, being entertained is a way of *occupying time*²³⁸. This does not exclude a person from thinking that he is having an entertaining time although the time being occupied is not entertaining, because laziness makes the entertainment boring.

Entertainments occupy a considerable part of leisure and are occasions of discovering alternatives to employ time according to the wishes or necessities of the person who enjoys it. When discovery fills up time efficiently, leisure is *entertaining*; when there is lack of originality and excess of routine or boredom, then leisure is *boring*. Creativeness, a faculty discovered with facility, is essential for an entertaining leisure time. That is why one of the best discoveries of leisure is friendship, a human virtue that helps to *gain time*; with friends time passes quickly and at the same time, *prolongs itself*. The time offer acquires quality when it is filled with an abundance of values, with immaterial density that confers it force. Giving one's time is a way of giving a meaning to donation²³⁹.

Mongardini made a correct analysis of the *colonization of individual time*²⁴⁰, a modern way of improper appropriation of this asset that is common to every human being. Individual time is collectivized, making it anonymous under such terms as audience, *target* or the lugubrious *nicho*. Time colonization should not be confused with time destined to satisfy collective necessities, freely agreed on. There is an increase of *time colonizers* in our time, of physical or juridical people who try to *conquer* other people's time by direct or indirect pressure. This colonization finds special interest in areas of commerce, politics and social relations. Com-

238 «Pleasure and action make the hours seem short». William SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*, II, 3.

239 Grillo, Andrea (1999), p. 75.

240 MONGARDINI, Carlo, «La colonizzazione del tempo individuale e la trasformazioni dell'azione collettiva», in *Epistemologia e Sociologia*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1985. Cited by Llano, Alejandro (1988), p. 97.

munication media constitutes a tempting way of attracting dominion over somebody else's time.

C) *Information and leisure*

«Information time is a social time dedicated to forming and informing which is carried out through communication; it lacks limits and requires leisure time not only to receive contents but also to value them»²⁴¹. Cousido poses a key question in the relation of leisure with information. The informative relation established in leisure time is not limited to the fact of receiving information or having access to diverse and plural informative products and services, in different supports and media (daily newspapers, magazines, radio and television programmes, Internet, etc.). The question is not receiving information but in being able to count with the information needed; for this it is necessary to have *time to evaluate the offer* that can cover the hours or minutes of leisure. Only this way will leisure time not be idle, useless and lost time. A person needs information because he ignores its contents and this ignorance begins to disappear in the moment he recognizes what he is ignorant about. This step requires time because it is not enough to transmit information and make it reach its target. Transmitting increasingly takes less time; *in-forming* to be able to transmit a message is a difficult question when predicting how much time this will take.

Information in leisure time can *fill* the hours if people's intelligence is enriched, if a repose that *gains time* is attained. Technological innovation offers the possibility of interactive actions that facilitates exercising the right (prior to choosing), which is the *right to ask*. If one can ask before choosing, there is a possibility of clearing up doubts and getting to know the advantages or disadvantages of accepting the handing over of time to receive a programme, a periodic publication, etc. This pause to ponder does not impede the *transmission* being realized in *real time*. Speed is to better a choice, not to force it.

²⁴¹ Cousido, Pilar (1989a), p. 682.

Some years ago Stigler pointed out that the cost of information is the cost of going from ignorance to knowledge²⁴². In the information market this cost acquires an immaterial significance which does not necessarily have an incidence in the sale price it usually has in industrial activity. Information time is generally marked by the *apparent gratuitousness* (in information there is no free gratuitousness) or by a price that can be qualified as *political*. It is an *apparent gratuitousness* because there is always payment made in an esteemed asset: time. The reader or spectator at least hands over his time to the information entrepreneur, although in the majority of cases he not conscious of handing over something of such singular value. Progressively gaining ground is the idea that to mediate the influence of informative products and services (daily newspapers, magazines, radio and television programmes, advertising, etc.), an adequate method, though not extent of difficulty, is to evaluate how persons distribute their time at home, both the time destined to the media as that to other tasks²⁴³.

In the relation between leisure and information there is a risk of attending more to the support than the contents. The runaway illusion that technological innovation offers many possibilities, on occasions leads to dedicating time to seeking, to later not go anywhere. Seeking for the sake of seeking and navigating for the sake of navigating is a way of emptying of contents the time of leisure. It would be a shame, for instance, to think that one is really enjoying a sunny day in spring just because one sees, on the computer screen, that the meteorological previsions of many *navigated* sources confirm a sunny springtime day²⁴⁴. In the background is the idea previously announced that time has a meaning in the measure that it

242 «Informations cost are the cost of transportations from ignorance to omniscience, and seldom can a trader afford to take the entire trip». Stigler, George J. (1983), p. 119.

243 Cfr. among others, Shew, William B.; Stelzer, Irwin M. (1996), p. 127.

244 The advances of technology are an passionate adventure of our time, being instruments that allow the intelligence to advance in the access to information, knowledge, knowing. But every instrument that helps in the life of intelligence should not spoil its condition of instrument. If not, one could arrive at a literal interpretation of affirmations like the following: «I would like to construct a machine that could be proud of me». Cited in Rifkin, Jeremy (1996), p. 88.

is time that relates persons, united in a timeless relation, without measure²⁴⁵.

Observing the presence of perverse applications in the information/leisure relation may lead to having distressful and in some way, pessimistic visions in the face of leisure time. There is no lack of predictions of a future communications society that will annul the freedom of leisure time, converting it in a sum of programmed entertainments with no possibility of real choice, only an apparent kind of freedom because we will only choose what is given to us. Watching some television programmes it can be understood why Karl Popper wrote: «a democracy cannot exist if the television is not put under control»²⁴⁶. However, there are many positive aspects in the information society. There is the leisure time covered by knowledge or information, impossible to get in another way and the communication media (especially audiovisual) try to fill the hours of solitude of many persons. Here there are dialogues in the silence that only the intelligence recognizes²⁴⁷.

Among the routes that lead to information *filling in* leisure time, there is one with a proper name: education. Educating in real value, not in the apparent or fictitious, is a difficult task because «our culture educates us badly because it values what is brilliant»²⁴⁸. Education will be perverse if it only looks at success, if it has as a guide or a rule the so-called *moral of success*, or if it circulates time dreams that take the extraordinary and exceptional as their models. Fortunately, the majority of people increasingly look for more time to fill their lives with human and transcendent meaning: time that *gains time*.

245 Grillo, Andrea (1999), pp. 79-80, 100-101.

246 «Una democrazia non può esistere se non si mette sotto controllo la televisione, o più precisamente non può esistere a lungo fino a quando il potere della televisione non sarà stato pienamente scoperto. Dico così perché anche i nemici della democrazia non sono ancora del tutto consapevoli del potere della televisione». Popper, Karl, R. (1994), p. 24.

247 «Leisure is a form of this silence that is an estimate for the perception of reality: only the person who keeps quiet hears; who does not keep quiet does not hear». Pieper, Josef (1998), p. 45.

248 Polo, Leonardo (1984), p. 271.

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